



# Transforming the patient navigation experience starts at the digital front door

📅 September 5, 2025



## Khang Nguyen, MD

Let's be honest: For all the opportunity technological advancements bring, they can just as easily detract from service experiences I've had with online or telephone chatbots, which never seem to have the quality of customer service professionals.

Just as we expect convenience, speed, and options in everyday life — like choosing a bed size or a car seat — we expect a similar user experience in health care. Patients expect health care portals to streamline access to services and scheduling. However, these digital tools often fall short, resulting in patient frustration.

# A new approach: Kaiser Permanente Intelligent Navigator

Motivated by this observation, our team in Kaiser Permanente in Southern California saw the need to transform the health care system. Enter the Kaiser Permanente Intelligent Navigator (KPIN), which harnesses artificial intelligence and machine learning experience as they access care and retrieve health information.

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Powered by Natural Language Processing — a form of artificial intelligence — this tool was built to create a more personalized experience through its patient portal. It allows patients to describe their health concerns and receive clinically appropriate action. This could range from scheduling an appointment to making a referral or bringing patients where they need to go.

## Built by clinicians, designed for patient safety

We are proud to say that the KPIN is a custom-built digital customer service platform, designed to improve the patient experience. This tool. KPIN watches closely for any indication that a patient is facing a medical emergency and provides immediate attention versus a future appointment. The patient will immediately be connected to the appropriate care.

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[A recent paper in Nature](#) showed the platform detected urgent medical cases with 97.7% accuracy. Research shows that 70% of patients who book appointments online are successful. Meanwhile, more than half of patients who used the KPIN for their health and health care.

Patients shouldn't have to navigate an obstacle course to receive care. The process — from seeing a doctor to completing the entire care journey seamless, from the first point of contact to achieving a quality outcome.

*Khang Nguyen, MD, is assistant executive medical director of Care Transformation at Southern California Permanente Medical Group.*

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