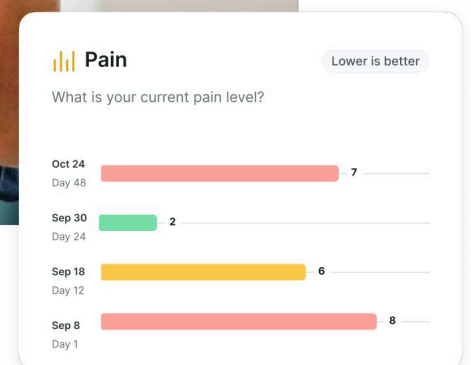
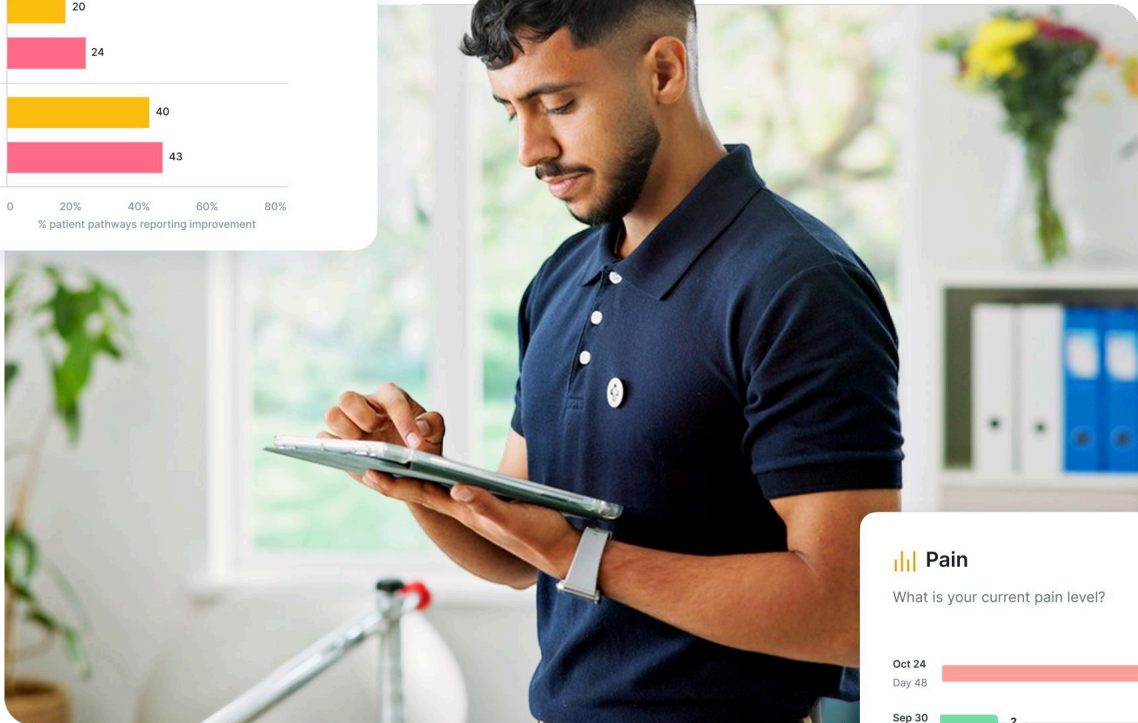
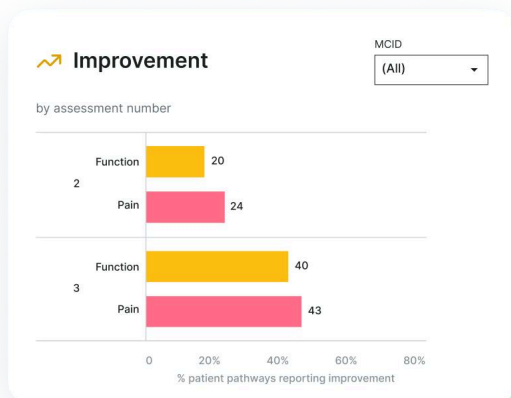


GUIDE

Turning MSK Outcomes Data Collection Into Clinical Action

By Medbridge



Introduction

Patient-reported outcomes (PROs) data was once viewed primarily as a reporting requirement, or a ‘nice-to-have’ feature that operated on a more superficial level. But more recently, outcomes are becoming a foundational component of care delivery, reimbursement strategy, referral relationships, and organizational performance.

There is now a larger market shift that is accelerating the need for more sophisticated outcomes infrastructure. Healthcare organizations face increasing pressure to demonstrate value, improve quality, support hybrid care models, and participate in value-based reimbursement programs, and outcomes data is increasingly central to these efforts.¹ Organizations that can effectively collect, interpret, and act on PROs are better positioned to improve care quality, strengthen payer relationships, and differentiate themselves in competitive referral markets.

This also coincides with the need for many rehabilitation organizations to rethink outcomes as FOTO (Focus on Therapeutic Outcomes) is sunseting. For years, FOTO served as a trusted tool for collecting patient-reported outcomes across rehabilitation settings. While no single vendor defines the future of outcomes measurement, the retirement of a long-standing platform has forced many organizations to re-evaluate how outcomes fit into their broader care strategy.

Given the moment, healthcare organizations have an opportunity to rethink outcomes collection entirely. Rather than treating it as an optional standalone reporting activity, we should instead strive to create a connected system that informs clinical decisions, operational improvements, and long-term organizational strategy.

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The industry shift toward outcomes-driven care

Across the healthcare industry, there is a growing expectation that reimbursement models are tied to measurable performance and patient outcomes. The transition from **volume-based to value-based care** continues each year, creating new expectations for healthcare providers to demonstrate effectiveness through objective, measurable data. Over the past decade, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has expanded quality reporting initiatives and increasingly emphasizes patient-centered measures as part of broader healthcare transformation efforts.²

Given these external forces, outcomes collection has become a non-negotiable for rehabilitation organizations. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) identifies outcomes measurement as a core element of demonstrating the value of rehabilitation services and improving patient care.³ But aside from valuable insights into the patient experience, outcomes data is now becoming essential for:

- Demonstrating quality to payers
- Supporting referral relationships
- Participating in value-based arrangements
- Managing hybrid and digital care programs
- Identifying opportunities for quality improvement

Meanwhile, the industry-wide expansion of hybrid care models only further elevates the importance of outcomes measurement. Today, most of a patient's recovery journey will take place outside the clinic walls, giving clinicians little visibility into a significant portion of their patient's progress. Because of these systemic limitations, organizations need reliable ways to monitor patient progress, evaluate effectiveness, and guide clinical decision-making across care settings.

Historically, organizations could view outcomes collection as a secondary priority. But given these new systemic pressure points, a 'wait-and-see' approach to outcomes now carries significant risk. Without structured outcomes strategies, organizations may struggle to set performance benchmarks that will help them demonstrate clinical value and identify opportunities for care improvement. Without a robust outcomes data set to rely on, they will find it difficult to differentiate themselves from organizations with access to such data in referral conversations. And as outcomes increasingly influence reimbursement, network participation, and strategic partnerships, organizations lacking robust measurement capabilities may find themselves at a competitive disadvantage during payer negotiations.

Why legacy outcomes tools often fall short



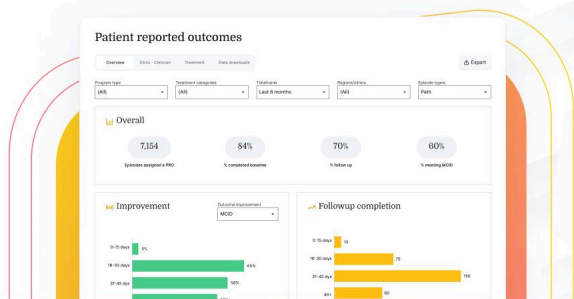
Despite the growing importance of outcomes data, many organizations continue to rely on outcomes collection models that separate measurement from care delivery, treating it as a parallel process. Standalone outcomes platforms were layered on top of existing workflows, requiring clinicians to navigate additional systems and patients to complete assessments disconnected from their care experience.

While these approaches helped organizations collect data, they frequently created operational challenges tied to low completion rates and fragmented patient experiences. Getting patients to actually fill out a questionnaire detailing their care experience can be challenging enough, but even if they are willing to participate, how well do they recall their experience days or weeks later?

On the clinician side, limited clinical adoption and additional work burden contributed to inconsistent data collection, delaying visibility into patient progress. With outcomes data collected separately from care delivery, it becomes harder to identify the friction points that actually happen *during* care programs. Given this valuable insight earlier, a clinician would be able to proactively steer the care plan in a new direction rather than waiting for a patient feedback survey.

The fundamental issue is that outcomes have historically lived outside the natural flow of care. Research consistently shows that patient engagement and completion rates improve when digital health interventions are integrated into routine care rather than presented as separate activities.⁵ As organizations evaluate life after FOTO and other legacy outcomes solutions, the question is no longer, "What outcomes tool should replace my current system?" Instead, it should be:

“How can outcomes become an integrated part of care delivery itself?”



What digital MSK buyers should expect from modern outcomes infrastructure

The healthcare industry has made massive strides in digital education, patient engagement, and remote therapeutic monitoring over the past decade. Given all the tools at our disposal, modern outcomes infrastructure should do far more than generate reports. Surveys should feel like part of the care plan, not paperwork.

That's why organizations should now expect solutions that are:



Integrated

Outcomes collection should be embedded directly within care workflows, patient engagement programs, and clinical pathways. Research shows that integrated outcomes programs drive greater adoption than standalone reporting tools, providing a key communication and engagement tool ^{4,5}



Flexible

Organizations need the ability to support different patient populations, care models, clinical specialties, and operational goals. Today, we have the ability to offer multi-modal delivery of PROs via SMS, email, QR code, or within a mobile-friendly app. We can send reminders, offer accessibility-ready UI, and adapt to what works for patients and clinicians. Reducing friction makes it easier and more likely that patients will follow through.



Actionable

Data should appear where decisions are made, helping clinicians adjust treatment plans, identify risks, and improve patient engagement. Outcomes integrated into a patient dashboard can show assigned vs. completed PROs at a glance, with the ability to resend the invite if not completed. Clinicians can see the full clinical picture, including outcome and engagement data, in one view.

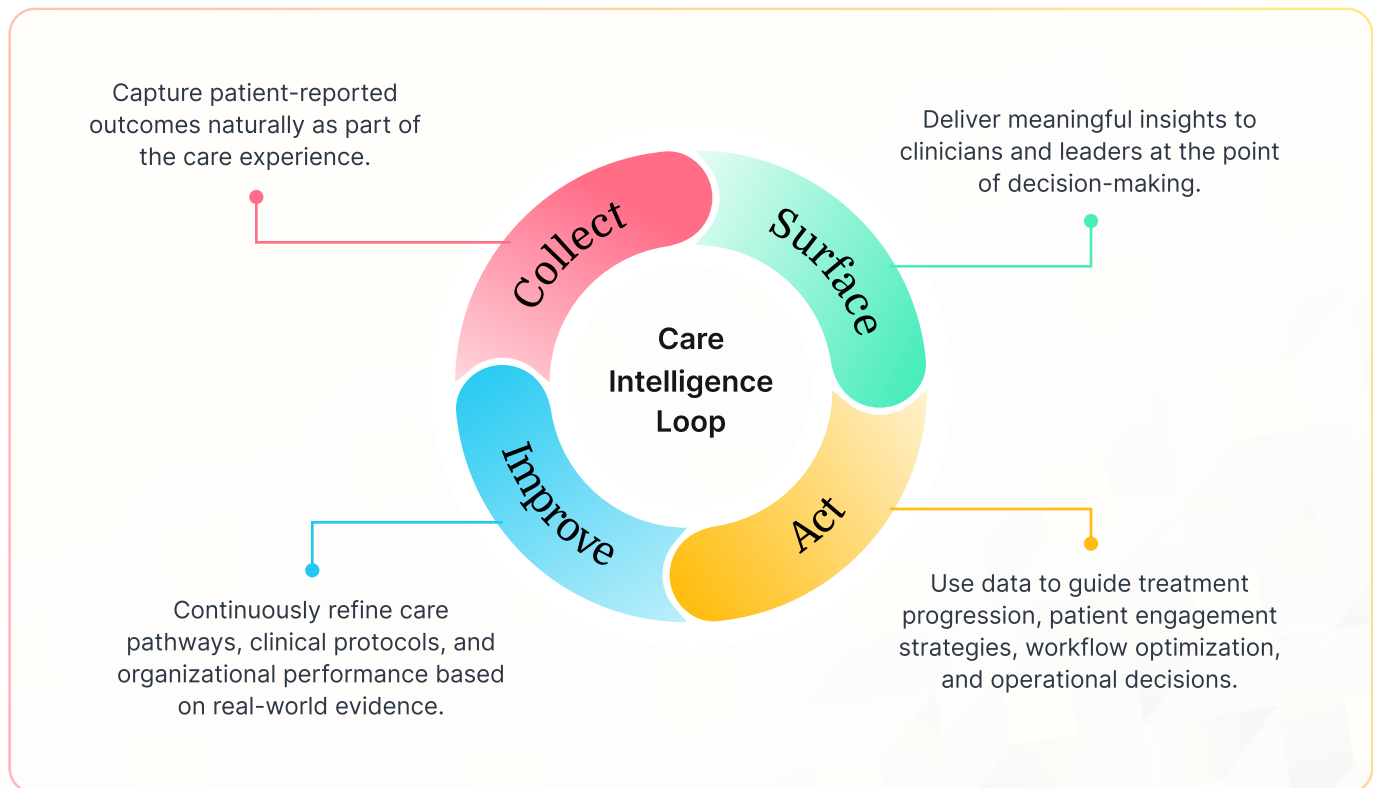


Transparent

Organizations need meaningful benchmarking, risk adjustment, and performance visibility that support strategic conversations with payers, referral partners, and leadership teams. Research suggests organizations achieve the greatest value when data collection directly informs ongoing care improvement rather than serving solely retrospective reporting functions.² A modern outcomes solution should be able to capture rates by clinician, location, and condition, including the percentage of patients achieving Minimal Clinically Important Difference (MCID), with trend lines. This provides the data leadership needs to act on, not just report.

Introducing the Care Intelligence Loop

Traditional outcomes models focus on **measurement**, but care intelligence focuses on **improvement**. The Care Intelligence Loop provides a framework for transforming outcomes data into actionable clinical and organizational insights.



The **Care Intelligence Loop** creates a self-reinforcing cycle where outcomes data becomes a driver of better care rather than simply a record of past performance. Using this model, organizations can enable:



Stronger Clinical Decision-Making

Measurement-based care has been associated with improved clinical decision-making and patient-centered treatment planning.⁶

Clinicians gain better visibility into patient progress and earlier identification of risk factors. This helps them make more informed progression decisions—as well as enhance goal setting for future quality improvement initiatives.



Improved Patient Engagement

When outcomes collection is integrated into care experiences, patients are more likely to participate, creating more complete data while helping patients remain active participants in their recovery. Clinicians also benefit from this patient engagement bump, according to a survey questionnaire regarding the use and perceived benefits and barriers of standardized outcome measures:

Nearly 90% of participants who used these measures believed that they enhanced communication with patients and helped direct the plan of care.⁷



Better Quality Improvement

With enhanced visibility into outcomes data, organizational leaders gain visibility into performance variation, program effectiveness, and care delivery trends, as well as new opportunities for targeted intervention.



More Productive Referral and Payer Conversations

Risk-adjusted benchmarking provides more meaningful comparisons across organizations and providers,⁸ helping organizations support negotiations, strengthen partnerships, and demonstrate quality.



A practical framework for getting started

Step 1 - Define The Why

Identify the primary goals driving outcomes collection:

- Quality improvement
- Referral differentiation
- Payer strategy
- Hybrid care optimization
- Regulatory readiness

Step 2 - Identify Ownership and Champions

Successful initiatives typically involve:

- Executive sponsorship
- Clinical leadership
- Operational champions
- Cross-functional collaboration

Step 3 - Standardize Measures and Workflows

Establish consistent:

- Outcome measures
- Collection cadences
- Reporting expectations

Step 4 - Reduce Friction

Make surveys feel like part of care rather than additional paperwork by:

- Integrating outcomes into existing workflows
- Establishing automation
- Offering multi-modal delivery of PROs via SMS, email, and QR code.

Step 5 - Review Data Regularly

Develop reporting cadences that allow teams to monitor:

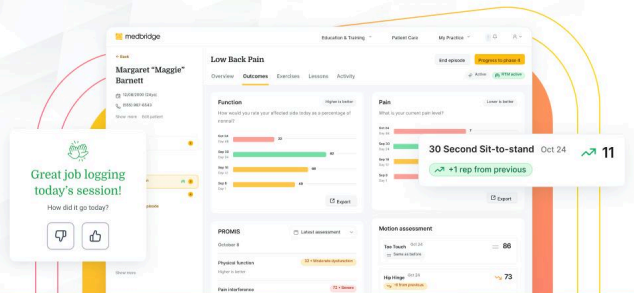
- Adoption
- Completion rates
- Performance trends
- Quality indicators

Step 6 - Act on Insights

Use findings to improve:

- Clinical protocols
- Patient engagement strategies
- Care pathways
- Operational workflows

What to look for in an outcomes partner



Healthcare organizations evaluating outcomes platforms should prioritize:

	New Model	Old Model
Workflow Integration	✓ Embedded into care delivery. ✓ Minimal clinician burden. ✓ Connected patient experience.	✗ Bolted-on solutions that live outside care workflows ✗ Requires extra work from clinicians ✗ Disconnected from patient experience
Clinical Context	✓ Outcomes connected to treatment decisions ✓ Actionable data	✗ Outcomes added on after treatment concludes ✗ Patients answer surveys disconnected from their care plan
Benchmarking and Risk Adjustment	✓ Stand-alone benchmarking value ✓ Historical data is easily accessible	✗ Data lives where decisions don't
Care Ecosystem	✓ Outcomes tied to education, engagement, and care delivery ✓ Everything is connected on one platform	✗ Isolated outcomes collection ✗ Clinicians juggle two systems



Get true care intelligence with Medbridge Outcomes

Medbridge Outcomes was built around a simple idea: **outcomes should be a natural byproduct of care, not a separate administrative process**. Rather than relying on disconnected systems and manual workflows, Medbridge embeds outcomes collection directly into the patient care experience, making it easier for clinicians to gather meaningful data and use it to inform decisions.

Medbridge combines patient-reported outcomes collection, risk adjustment, organizational analytics, benchmarking, and integrated engagement workflows into a connected system designed to support smarter care delivery across the continuum of hybrid MSK care. By connecting outcomes to patient engagement, care programs, and clinical workflows, organizations can collect data more consistently while reducing burden on both patients and clinicians.

Medbridge supports both PROMIS and legacy outcome measures through an expansive outcomes library, giving organizations the flexibility to align collection strategies with evolving clinical, operational, and regulatory needs. Customizable assessment cadences and outcome mapping help standardize collection across clinics, programs, and service lines while supporting organizational goals.

Medbridge integrates outcomes collection directly into digital home exercise programs, guided care pathways, and patient engagement workflows. Outcomes can be captured alongside patient activity, pain levels, functional status, and adherence data, providing clinicians with a more complete picture of recovery without disrupting the patient experience.

At the organizational level, Medbridge transforms outcomes data into actionable care intelligence through benchmarking, risk-adjusted comparisons, and enterprise analytics. Leaders can monitor performance across clinicians, clinics, and programs, identify variation in care delivery, uncover opportunities for improvement, and demonstrate value to payers, referral partners, and health system stakeholders.

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Outcomes Assessment

Where do you feel your knee pain most often?

Select one answer from the list

☒ Front of the knee
Helper text.

☐ Inside of the knee

Pain
What is your current pain level? Lower is better

Oct 24 Day 48 7

Step 30 Day 24 2

Step 18 Day 12 6

Step 8 Day 1 8

PROMIS

Latest assessment

October 8

Physical function
Higher is better 32 • Moderate dysfunction

Pain interference
Lower is better 72 • Severe

Ability to participate on social roles and activity
Additional info 51 • Within normal limits

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Conclusion

The future of Outcomes is care intelligence

For the future of rehabilitation outcomes to succeed, we need to move beyond measurement and embrace care intelligence.

As value-based care expands, hybrid delivery models mature, and expectations for accountability increase, healthcare organizations will need systems that help transform data into action. By embedding outcomes into the same workflows used to deliver care, those organizations can collect more complete data, surface insights at the point of care, support better clinical decisions, and create a continuous feedback loop that drives ongoing improvement in patient and organizational performance.

The organizations that thrive in the next era of rehabilitation will be those that can collect meaningful data, connect outcomes to care delivery, continuously improve performance, and demonstrate value across the entire care continuum.

Ready to turn data collection into clinical action?

[Explore Medbridge Outcomes](#)[Request a Demo](#)

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