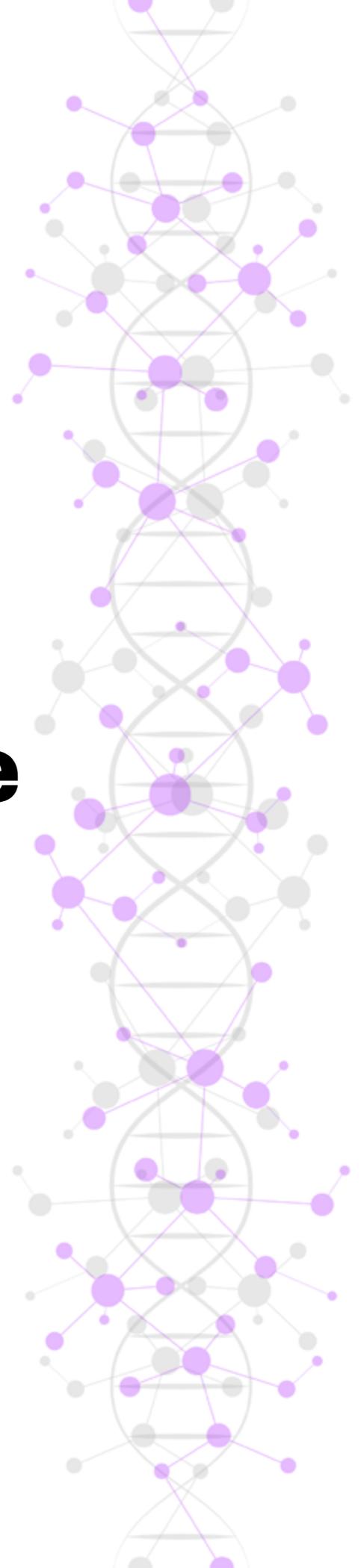




How the **Power of Automation** Can Drive Value in Canadian Healthcare





Healthcare is by far the Canadian public sector’s largest expenditure, and rightly so. The promise of universal health care has become an iconic trait of the Canadian experience. Keeping faith with this vision is an expensive proposition, with health spending in Canada amounting to \$264 billion in 2019 (\$7,068 per Canadian) —11.6 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).¹ With an aging population—there are as many people aged 65 or older as there are youngsters under 14, whereas in 1987, there were two to three times as many children as seniors. Now with one of the world’s largest per capita Baby Boom populations teetering on the edge of seniority, those costs will only rise.

But focusing on managing healthcare spending purely in terms of mitigating costs is not the right answer. True value in healthcare also entails the measurement of outcomes, in this equation:

$$\text{VALUE} = \text{OUTCOMES} / \text{COSTS}$$

Healthcare is among the most labour-dependent industries. Rather than a denominational approach of cutting staff costs, there is more opportunity for modernization to focus staff on activities that drive better outcomes by using intelligent automation to execute lower-value tasks—such as repetitive administrative activities, in order to focus staff on higher-value strategic work and reduce errors from tedious manual actions. In the new healthcare value equation, automation is the driver of economic value and improving the human experience.

1- source: <https://www.cihi.ca/en/national-health-expenditure-trends-1975-to-2019>

CATCHING UP TO AUTOMATION



Despite research and advances in life-saving treatments, the healthcare industry has been slow to embrace business and clinical process automation. In other words, the industry is progressive in terms of life sciences, but conservative in the field of information technology.

According to Accenture's 2020 Digital Health Technology Vision, only 39% of healthcare organizations report that they have inclusive design or human-centric design principles in place to support human-machine collaboration.

Furthermore, 85% of health executives acknowledge that technology has become an inextricable part of the human experience, as machines can do things humans cannot, making this is especially important in healthcare where there is a labor shortage.²

Better health outcomes result from staff focusing on patient care and value-adding enterprise activities. Intelligent automation allows that shift in focus and is key to driving value in the new healthcare value equation.

Bots are software instances that use artificial intelligence to automate routine processes and decision-making. Tapping into the value of the robotic workforce is a must as "Gartner, Inc. predicts that, by 2021, 70 percent of organizations will assist their employees' productivity by integrating AI in the workplace," and research company Forrester additionally predicts in 2021 that there will be four million bots doing office administration, sales and related tasks.³ With 78% of health executives who believe the stakes for innovation have never been higher—getting it 'right' will require new ways of innovating including intelligent automation.

2 - 2019 Digital Health Consumer Survey
<https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/health/accenture-digital-health-technology-vision-2020>

3 - https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-133/Accenture-Digital-Health-Tech-Vision-2020.pdf#zoom=40

DELIVERING VALUE

Intelligent automation can help health organizations better perform routine tasks with well-defined processes. In fact, automation can be orders of magnitude more productive at those tasks than humans. And there is a huge opportunity to realize that productivity.

Accenture estimates that today, only 34 percent of finance tasks are automated across the healthcare industry, even though between 60 and 80 percent of backward-looking accounting tasks can be automated.⁴

The value that can be driven by automating operational processes is not soft-dollar, qualitative value. In the four key value propositions for health care, each has a calculable impact on the bottom line to achieve rapid system modernization.



4 - https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-104/Accenture-health-traditional-healthcare-finance-skills-are-on-verge-of-extinction.pdf



- 1. Better patient and caregiver experience through easier system navigation.** For example, software automation bots can provide pre-visit education to patients to better prepare them and streamline their journey through the system. Accenture's Logical Operating Model estimates this can have a one to five percent impact on operating expenses.
- 2. Better patient and population health outcomes.** Automated triaging and transition support can help caregivers provide the appropriate, effective and timely care that delivers better outcomes and saves lives, both on an individual patient level and on a population-wide level, with an estimated operating expense impact of five to 10 percent.
- 3. Better value and efficiency through more appropriate use of system resources,** such as for back-office operations, device and equipment tracking, etc. Accenture estimates a one to five percent impact on operating expenses.
- 4. Better provider experience through greater system and provider confidence.** Opportunities for improved data exchange, clinical licensing and continuing education could have as much as a 10 to 20 percent operating expense impact.

ON BOARD WITH AUTOMATION

Healthcare finance executives are increasingly recognizing the impact automation can have in the back office. An overwhelming majority (77 percent) of healthcare chief financial officers (CFO) believe robotic process automation and other forms of automation can free up current resources for more strategic work — for example, performing analytical tasks to provide operational insights across the organization.⁵

With a globally proven automation delivery framework and technology infrastructure design models, paired with leading health care practitioners, Accenture's methodology has delivered more than 40,000 full-time equivalents (FTE) in robot workforce worldwide.

Contact us to discuss how we can help re-imagine the health value equation for your organization.



5 - https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-104/Accenture-health-traditional-healthcare-finance-skills-are-on-verge-of-extinction.pdf

AUTHOR:



Jimmy Yang

Managing Director,
Strategy & Consulting, Health
[**jimmy.yang@accenture.com**](mailto:jimmy.yang@accenture.com)

SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTORS:

Joshua Schwartz

Consulting Analyst

ABOUT ACCENTURE

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world’s largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 505,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives.

Visit Accenture at www.accenture.com.