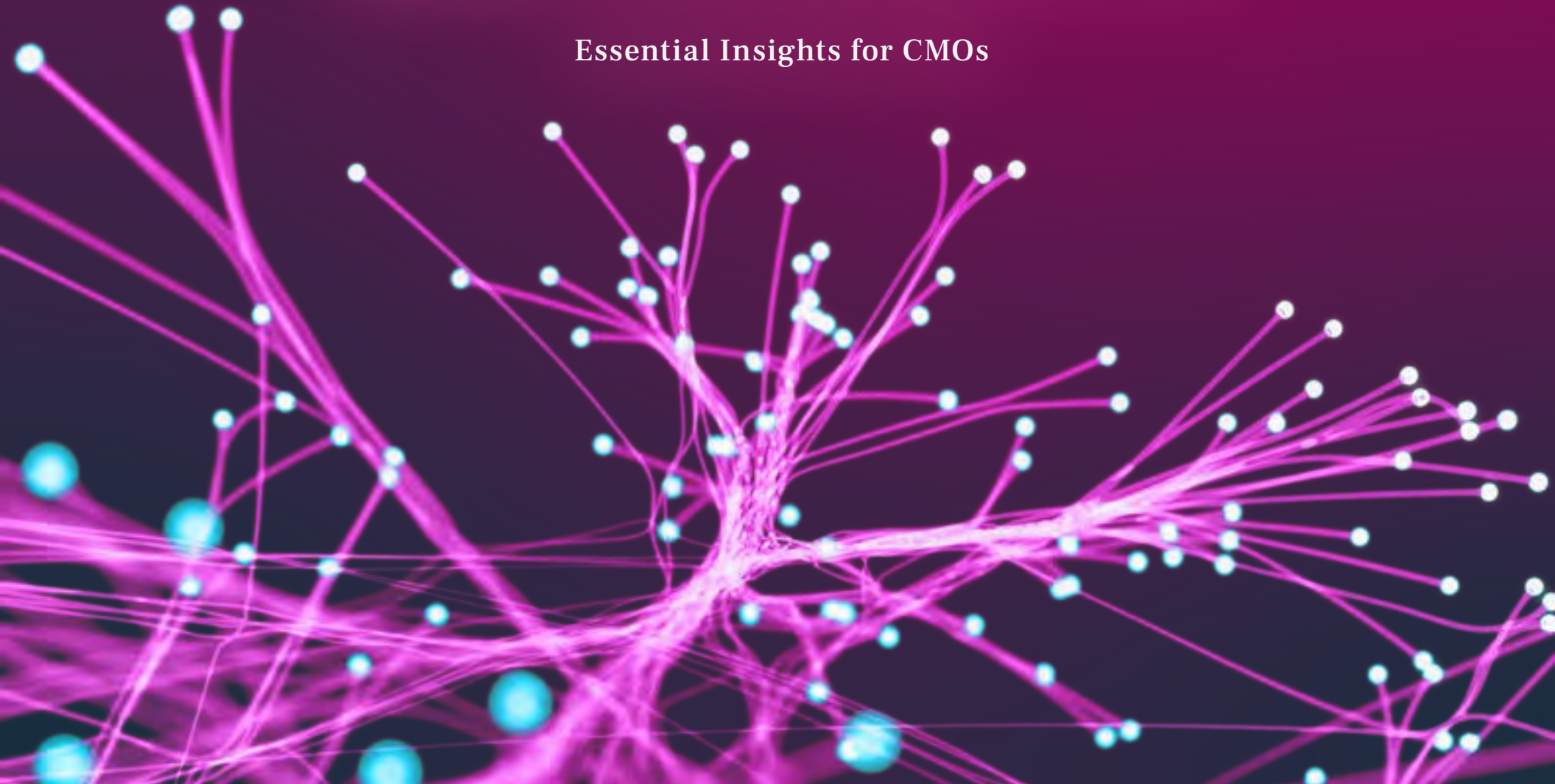


An Evaluation of Kaiser Permanente's UX

Essential Insights for CMOs

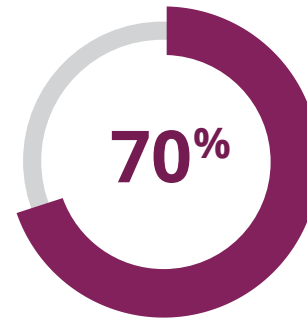


SUMMARY

Usability Challenges Undermine Kaiser Permanente's Digital Patient Experience

Kaiser Permanente, a leading nonprofit healthcare provider in the U.S., integrates health services with advanced digital tools to simplify and enhance healthcare access for its users. However, this UX evaluation reveals several areas on the platform where usability issues, ineffective navigation, limited feature visibility, and overwhelming information hierarchy create significant barriers to a smooth user experience. These obstacles hinder patients from accessing essential information and completing critical tasks, such as comparing health plans, scheduling appointments, and managing prescriptions. To uphold its commitment to patient-centered care in the digital space, Kaiser Permanente must address these challenges, refining its platform to be more intuitive, accessible, and supportive of users' healthcare needs.

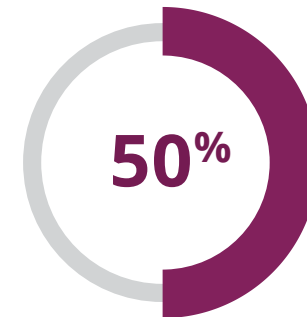
Key Findings



70% of users faced navigation challenges due to **unclear information hierarchy** and **poorly placed tools**



62.5% **struggled to locate key features** like prescriptions and plan comparisons



50% had **difficulty with scheduling appointments** and **finding primary care options**



RESEARCH METHODS



Heuristic evaluations



Usability testing



Thematic analysis of findings

DEMOGRAPHICS



 Female



 Male



 Desktop



 Mobile

 Age range

30 - 65

INSIGHT 1

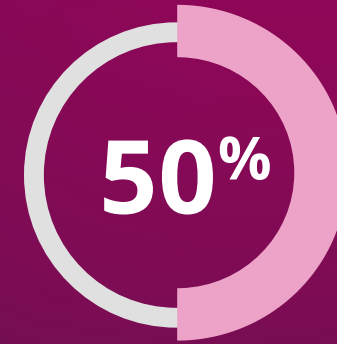
Inefficient Navigation Impairs Access to Health Plan Options

Kaiser Permanente's digital platform lacks an intuitive navigation structure, making it difficult for users to locate critical health plan information. Users frequently encountered multi-step, unclear paths when searching for plan details, which led to frustration, confusion, and increased time spent on the site. This disjointed navigation not only discourages engagement with essential resources but also diminishes users' confidence in Kaiser Permanente's ability to provide a seamless, supportive digital experience.

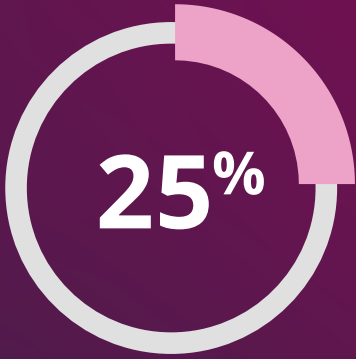
UX RECOMMENDATION

To improve usability, Kaiser Permanente should introduce a dedicated "Health Plans" menu in the main navigation, featuring clearly organized subcategories such as "Plan Comparison," "Coverage Details," and "Enrollment Options." Additionally, a centralized health plans landing page should serve as a quick-access hub for all related information, guiding users efficiently to plan details. Simplifying the navigation structure in this way will help users make informed decisions quickly, reduce frustration, and enhance their overall experience on the platform.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗



50% of users struggled to locate health plan information efficiently



25% of users struggled to find the 'Compare Plans' call-to-action due to its lack of prominence

INSIGHT 2

Low Visibility of Plan Comparison Tool Impacts Decision Making

Kaiser Permanente's plan comparison tool, a critical feature for users evaluating health plans, lacks prominence on the website. Many users overlooked it due to its small size, muted color, and placement below the fold, making it difficult to locate among other content. For those seeking to compare plans, the absence of a clear, prominent call-to-action led to confusion and hindered decision making. This lack of visibility for a key feature reduces users' confidence in the site and detracts from their experience of comparing healthcare options, an essential component of patient-centered care.

UX RECOMMENDATION

To enhance the usability of the plan comparison tool, Kaiser Permanente should increase the tool's visibility by positioning the "Compare Plans" button in a more prominent location on the main health plan's page, ideally above the fold. Consider enlarging the button, using a bold color contrast, or adding subtle animations to draw users' attention. This placement should also be repeated in relevant sections, such as within individual plan details, so users can access it contextually when exploring plan options. Simplifying access to the comparison tool in this way will streamline the decision-making process, boost user engagement, and contribute to a more supportive, user-friendly digital experience.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗

INSIGHT 3

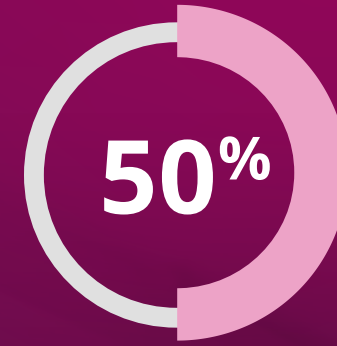
Inaccessible 'Schedule Appointment' Feature Negatively Impacts User Flow

The "Schedule Appointment" feature on Kaiser Permanente's website is not easily discoverable, disrupting users' ability to complete essential tasks smoothly. Many users reported difficulty locating the scheduling option, often finding it buried in submenus without clear labeling or prominent positioning to draw attention. For users looking to quickly book an appointment, an essential function for a healthcare platform, this lack of accessibility adds frustration and increases task time. This issue impacts overall user flow, as users are forced to spend additional time navigating and searching, detracting from a seamless experience that supports efficient access to healthcare services.

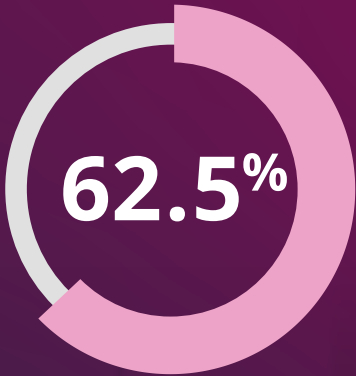
UX RECOMMENDATION

To improve accessibility and streamline the scheduling process, Kaiser Permanente should prioritize the visibility of the "Schedule Appointment" feature by placing it prominently on the homepage and within the main navigation bar. Using a distinctive, high-contrast button that is clearly labeled and accessible from multiple areas of the site will make it easier for users to locate and use this feature without unnecessary navigation. Additionally, conducting A/B tests on the placement and styling of this button can help ensure optimal visibility, leading to higher engagement with the scheduling tool and a smoother overall experience for users.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗



50% of users were unable to find the appointment scheduling feature easily



62.5% of users reported difficulty finding the PCP search feature

INSIGHT 4

Primary Care Physician Finder Lacks Discoverability

The Primary Care Physician (PCP) finder tool on Kaiser Permanente's website is challenging for users to locate, limiting their ability to find and connect with primary care providers efficiently. Users attempting to find the PCP search feature often encountered vague or inconsistent labeling, and the tool was not prominently placed within the main navigation. For a healthcare platform, easy access to this feature is crucial, as users need quick, reliable ways to choose and book appointments with their PCPs. This discoverability issue frustrates users, increases navigation time, and detracts from the platform's goal of delivering a supportive and user-centered healthcare experience.

UX RECOMMENDATION

Kaiser Permanente should improve the discoverability of the PCP finder tool by positioning it prominently in the main navigation bar or on the homepage, labeled clearly as "Find a Primary Care Physician" or "PCP Finder." Additionally, incorporating filters (e.g., location, specialty) and a search bar within the tool itself will enhance user interaction, enabling users to narrow down results and find physicians more effectively. By making this tool more visible and accessible, Kaiser Permanente can reduce friction in the user journey and better support users in accessing primary care services promptly.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗

INSIGHT 5

Information Overload and Poor Hierarchy Increase Cognitive Load

Kaiser Permanente's website presents users with an overwhelming amount of information on key pages, which lacks a clear visual hierarchy to guide users toward essential details. This results in a cluttered appearance where critical information, such as health plan details, scheduling, and account management, is buried among less relevant content, causing users to feel overloaded and uncertain about where to focus. This cluttered layout not only increases cognitive load but also detracts from the site's usability, as users struggle to locate the most pertinent information quickly and efficiently. For a healthcare platform, where users often seek immediate access to specific services, this poor information hierarchy reduces their ability to complete tasks.

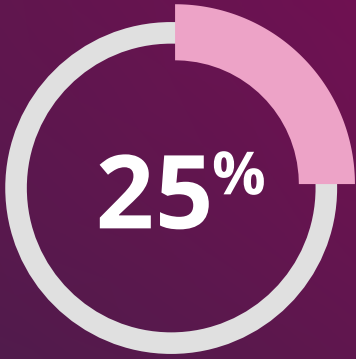
UX RECOMMENDATION

Simplifying the page layout with a clear visual hierarchy will improve usability and reduce cognitive load. Kaiser Permanente should prioritize essential content using larger headings, logical grouping, and ample whitespace to create a more organized and visually appealing structure. Reducing non-essential information and utilizing design elements like color contrast and bold headings will further guide users' attention to critical areas. Implementing this hierarchy will create a smoother experience, helping users process information faster and complete tasks with greater ease.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗



50% of users felt the website was cluttered and difficult to navigate due to an overwhelming amount of information and lack of clear visual hierarchy



25% of users struggled to locate clear information about inpatient care

INSIGHT 6

Lack of Clear Inpatient Care Information Creates Uncertainty

Kaiser Permanente's website does not clearly display inpatient care information, leaving users uncertain about their coverage options for critical health services. Many users reported that relevant details about inpatient care, including coverage specifics and eligibility, were difficult to find, often buried within general plan descriptions or labeled ambiguously. For users researching their options for inpatient services, this lack of clarity causes frustration and confusion, preventing them from understanding their benefits fully. Such gaps in information are particularly concerning in a healthcare context, where patients rely on transparent details to make informed decisions about their care.

UX RECOMMENDATION

To address this, Kaiser Permanente should create a dedicated section within each plan's details specifically for inpatient care information. This section should include clearly labeled information about inpatient services, coverage limits, and any associated costs. Adding tooltips or a glossary to explain terms related to inpatient care can further enhance user comprehension. By organizing this information in an accessible and well-labeled format, Kaiser Permanente can reduce user uncertainty, increase transparency, and improve users' confidence in understanding their coverage.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗

INSIGHT 7

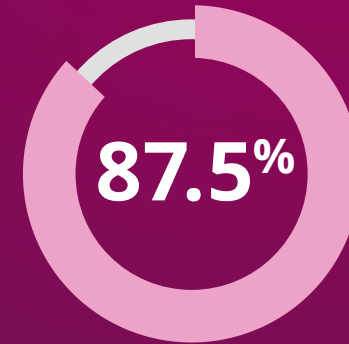
Prescription Refill Process Unintuitive and Hard to Locate

The prescription refill feature on Kaiser Permanente's website is difficult for users to locate and use, resulting in frustration for those needing to manage their medications efficiently. Users reported that the refill option was buried within submenus, lacked a clear label, and required multiple steps to access, an unexpected challenge for a task that should be straightforward and easily accessible. This issue not only complicates the user experience but also reduces the platform's effectiveness in supporting one of its essential healthcare services. For patients managing ongoing prescriptions, an unintuitive refill process adds unnecessary stress and deters users from engaging with the site as their primary source for healthcare management.

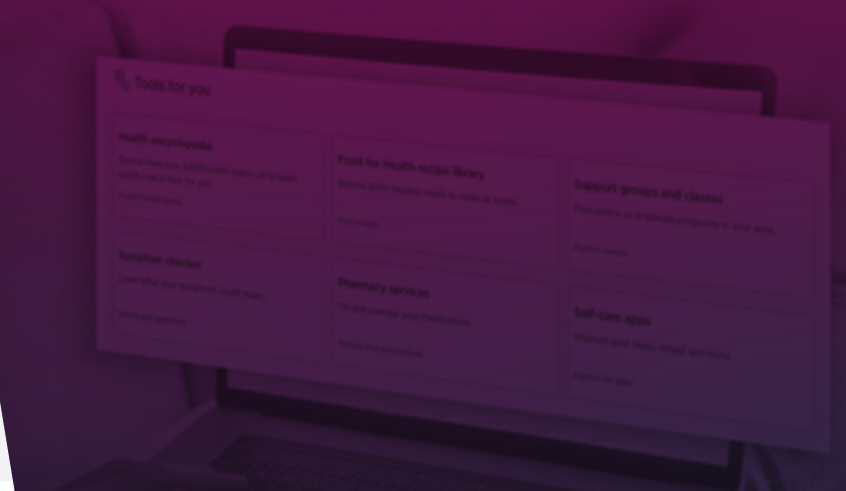
UX RECOMMENDATION

To streamline the refill process, Kaiser Permanente should place a clearly labeled "Refill Prescription" button in a prominent location on the homepage or within the main navigation bar. Additionally, creating a dedicated "Medication Management" section with direct links to refills, prescription history, and pharmacy contact options would further simplify the user journey. Improving the visibility and labeling of this feature will help users complete essential tasks quickly, enhancing their overall experience and encouraging ongoing engagement with the platform.

USABILITY TESTING HIGHLIGHTS ↗



87.5% of users were unable to easily locate the prescription refill feature





CONCLUSION

Our comprehensive evaluation of Kaiser Permanente’s website highlights key areas where usability challenges create friction in the user experience. From difficult-to-navigate menus and unclear feature placement to overwhelming page layouts and insufficiently visible calls-to-action, these issues hinder users’ ability to efficiently access vital healthcare information and services. As one of the leading healthcare providers, Kaiser Permanente has the opportunity to refine its digital interface to better align with the needs and expectations of its patients. By prioritizing a user-centered approach, improving navigation, enhancing feature visibility, and streamlining access to core tools like appointment scheduling, plan comparison, and prescription refills, Kaiser Permanente can transform its platform into an intuitive, supportive resource for users. Addressing these UX shortcomings will strengthen user engagement, improve overall satisfaction, and reaffirm Kaiser Permanente’s commitment to accessible, patient-centered digital healthcare experiences.

