Understandings physicians’ views on whether to recommend medical application software, or apps, to their patients was the purpose of a recent QuantiaMD poll of its members.

QuantiaMD, a physician social learning network, was interested in discovering how physicians use medical apps and prescribe them to their patients. The poll was conducted among 1,500 physicians from across the country at a digital health and emerging technologies presentation by Medgadget.com.

According to the poll results, 37 percent of physicians have prescribed an app to their patients.

QuantiaMD found that:

- 42 percent of physicians won’t prescribe apps because there is no regulatory oversight of them.
- 37 percent don’t know what apps are available.
- 21 percent never recommend apps to patients.
- 21 percent won’t prescribe apps because there is no longitudinal data on their effectiveness.
- 21 percent won’t prescribe apps because an overwhelming amount of patient data would result.

Yet, a 2012 poll by Mitchell Research and Communications, a public affairs and market research firm, revealed that patients are much more likely to follow the recommendation of a physician to download a health and wellness app than the recommendations of either friends or family.

When physicians do discuss apps with their patients, which ones are they most likely to mention? According to the Medical Economics magazine, here are the top 10 physician-recommended health and wellness apps of 2013:

1. **iTriage** allows patients to check their symptoms and easily locate a physician or hospital in an emergency.

2. **Diabetes App** helps patients monitor their diabetes outside the physician’s office and allows physicians to monitor any fluctuations in a patient’s condition. It provides a food database for patients to track their consumption.

3. **iCookbook Diabetic** provides diabetic-friendly recipes, nutritional information and health articles for people with diabetes. It was developed by dietitians.

4. **Diabetes in Check** provides digital coaching from certified diabetes educators. It gives constructive feedback as well as tools such as barcode scanners and meal planners.
5. **Glucose Companion** offers comprehensive monitoring of patients’ diabetes and allows patients to present a complete log to their physician at their next appointment. It’s a handy blood sugar and weight tracker.

6. **Blood Pressure Monitor** allows patients to monitor blood pressure and weight on the go. It provides lifetime data visualization and statistics reporting and displays medication correlations.

7. **HeartWise Blood Pressure Tracker** eases the process of monitoring blood pressure at home. It records blood pressure, resting heart rate and weight and allows patients to import their existing records.

8. **Mayo Clinic Health Community** provides access to an online health community, where patients can connect with, and learn from, other patients experiencing similar health issues. It offers a members-only discussion forum, as well as medical news and information from the Mayo Clinic.

9. **Tummy Trends** allows patients to track irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, exercise habits, water and fiber intake, and stress levels. They can share their report with their physicians through an interactive graph.

10. **iCalcRisk** encourages patients to adopt healthier lifestyles by calculating cardiac risk. Physicians can use app visualizations to show patients how they’re controlling cholesterol and blood pressure and lowering their heart attack risk.