

Innovation Spotlight

Unlocking the future of health care



Winter 2012

In this issue of Innovation Spotlight, we feature several ways we're working to make health care easier to manage and navigate. A new reminder program is available online or by mobile site, and helps members manage their medications. Our direct lending program provides financing options to help meet the needs of the health care community. Physicians can use a tool to run reports that generate information at the point of care to facilitate more open dialogue between doctors and patients. A direct-to-consumer appointment-scheduling tool helps users schedule same-day or next-day appointments at their convenience. These are a few of the latest ways we're working to develop game-changing products, tools and services.

For an informative, interactive experience, visit our Innovation website: <http://www.uhginnovation.com/#/home>.

Symmetry[®] Express Prototype

The Symmetry suite of solutions by OptumSM was introduced in 1993, and over time, has expanded to offer tools to help health care organizations measure value and understand costs, quality and risk.

Symmetry has continued to evolve and innovate, enhancing product offerings and responding to customer needs. The most recent example of this is the Symmetry Express prototype, a point-of-care tool that delivers actionable health analytics data to the physician.

Symmetry Express enhances the patient/physician encounter by supplying the doctor with critical information that may not have been previously available at the point of care. Information like prescription adherence, medical events occurring outside the provider's office, or "best practices" specific to the patient, such as reminders for recurring conditions or health concerns.

Here's how Symmetry Express works:

- Health care provider front desk staff submits the patient's member ID via their electronic tool (browser, electronic health record, health information exchange interface, etc.). This can be done a day before scheduled appointments, or just prior to the appointment for walk-ins.
- OptumInsightTM systems gather claims information for that patient and information is processed through Symmetry engines in less than a minute.
- Symmetry and HealthImpact actionable reports are sent to provider's e-tool.
- The health care provider uses the information as discussion points with the patient during the appointment.

By empowering providers with near real-time data, Symmetry Express can help a physician to know more about their patient and engage with them more directly, ultimately helping improve the quality of care and potentially impacting medical cost.

Status: Fully functioning prototype undergoing scalability and pre-production development

Direct Lending to Providers through OptumHealth BankSM

Helping the health care system work better requires investment in multiple resources. Medical equipment to diagnose and treat conditions. Software to connect doctors and patients. Patient services to monitor conditions. And practice management systems to move information, data and dollars more efficiently.

There are many choices for financing equipment and technology, but lending experience alone is not enough to address the financial needs of physicians and health care practices. OptumHealth BankSM, Member FDIC, has experience connecting financial services to the needs of the health care community.

OptumHealth Bank now provides commercial financing directly to physicians, medical practices, specialty groups, hospitals and other health care providers for technology and equipment – for example, imaging equipment, electronic medical record systems and pharmaceutical dispensing devices.

The application process is designed to be simple and collaborative. Commercial financing professionals work hand-in-hand with providers to identify their needs and customize solutions. Financing ranges from \$50,000 to \$2.5 million with terms up to six years at competitive rates. Providers may also apply for pre-approval of planned technology and equipment purchases at any time.

Offering direct lending to finance equipment and technology to enable sustainable, modern health communities supports Optum's goal of making the health care system work better for everyone. ▶

Status: Direct lending approved by OptumHealth Bank Board in November 2011

My Medication Reminders

The consequences of not taking medications as prescribed – or at all – can be serious, especially for people managing chronic diseases. To achieve the best health outcomes, medications must be taken as prescribed by a physician.

The My Medication Reminders program from OptumRx™ can help members maintain their medication routine with convenient text alerts. Members can access the program and set up reminders from the online member portal or by using the OptumRx mobile site from a smartphone.

The user enters a phone number and specifies their time zone. They then select from the following reminders:

- Refills
- Renewals
- Transfers (from retail to mail)
- Order shipment
- General medication reminders (once a day, user picks the day).
- Medication-specific

For medication-specific reminders, the user selects a medication from a list based on the medications they take. Users can choose reminders for as many prescribed medications as they wish. The user must then indicate the frequency of the reminder, which should correspond to the prescribed dosage schedule. For example, the user could specify “three times per day.” Then, the user can specify what those three times of the day ought to be, e.g. 9 a.m., noon and 3 p.m.

The program is available through all major mobile brands and providers. Additional features of the program include the ability to set up text message reminders to refill a prescription or to transfer a prescription from a retail pharmacy to a mail order pharmacy.

Data from a recent study¹ of members taking diabetes medications supports that the program is having an impact. Approximately 3,600 Medicare members and 2,100 commercial plan members participated, with an average age of 63. When compared to a similar control group that did not sign up to receive text reminders, those receiving My Medication Reminders had a 9 percent higher medication adherence rate.

Based on previous studies evaluating the health care costs associated with improved diabetes medication adherence², this would translate into an estimated total health care savings of \$724 per year for each participant.

My Medication Reminders is an example of how technology can be incorporated into helping members manage their health and achieve better health outcomes.

¹OptumRx internal study, October 2011

²Sokol et al. Impact of medication adherence on hospitalization risk and health care costs. *Med Care* 2005;43:521-530.

Status: Piloted in September 2010; fully launched

Curo Pilot

Curo, which is Latin for “care,” is a new appointment-scheduling and health advisor service available 24/7 that’s designed to help consumers conveniently find the right doctor and the right care path. A pilot of the complimentary service launched in December 2011 in the Kansas City market. Curo works across all health care plans and is publicly available to all consumers.

Users can go online to mycuro.com or call 1-855-2MY-CURO to speak to an advisor who can help navigate the health care system, addressing a variety of questions about providers, treatment options, resources for second opinions and appointment scheduling.

Once a consumer places a request for an appointment, a health advisor takes care of the scheduling. The consumer receives an initial appointment confirmation message via email or text, as well as a reminder 24 hours prior to the visit. If a consumer needs to reschedule, he or she can “click to call” from the confirmation message.

After the appointment, consumers can provide feedback on the visit via a provider satisfaction survey. Users can also subscribe to receive ongoing communications and content.

Curo is an example of one more way we’re working to make the health care experience simpler for consumers, providers and payers.

Status: Pilot launched in December 2011

UnitedHealthcare
Insurance Company



Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates.
Administrative services provided by United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates.