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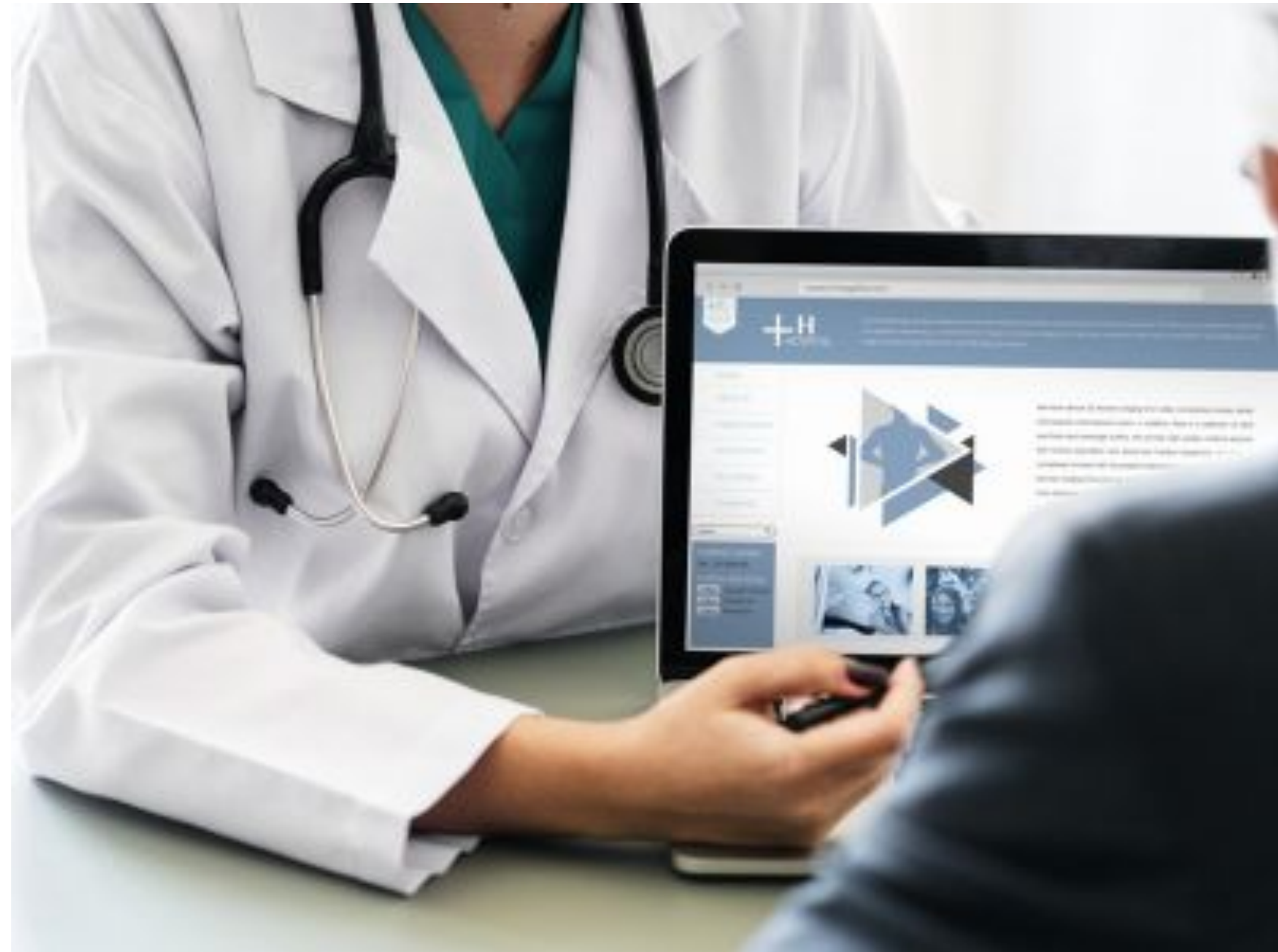
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How hospitals, health systems should approach blockchain

Mackenzie Garrity - Wednesday, September 18th, 2019 [Print](#) | [Email](#)



Pradeep Goel is the CEO of Solve.Care, a healthcare platform aimed at redefining care coordination.

Recently, Solve.Care has made partnerships with healthcare organizations to implement its healthcare technology in the market.

With more than 25 years of healthcare experience, Mr. Goel understands the demands of patients and providers. Below, Mr. Goel discusses how blockchain could improve healthcare as well as how hospital executives should approach blockchain.

Editor's note: Responses have been lightly edited for clarity and length.

Question: What problems in healthcare does blockchain have the potential to solve?

Pradeep Goel: Within the current healthcare industry, administration structures tend to be custom-built within their own silos and data structures. As a result, these structures tend to be vertically confined, with one party dictating everything from back-office functions and care delivery to payments and appointment scheduling. This type of data arrangement leads to the duplication of information and resource waste, which inevitably slows down the efficiency of patient care.

Blockchain technology can address this issue by decentralizing patient data and allowing for more

efficient collaboration between all stakeholders and, ultimately, better patient care coordination. Blockchain can also reduce or eliminate inefficiencies caused by administrative bureaucracy. Poor patient care coordination and lower health outcomes are often a result of care resources being directed toward managing administration, at a cost of billions of dollars each year in waste. In fact, up to 30 percent of medical bills are attributed to high administrative costs, partly due to the inefficient structures I mentioned above.

Unfortunately, fraud and waste are common in the industry and put a high price tag on hospital services, at the cost of the patient. This issue can be addressed by using blockchain to decentralize patient care coordination, which, in turn, reduces healthcare administration costs, resulting not only in major savings for all parties involved, including patients, healthcare providers, insurers, employers and government agencies, but also in improved care for patients. In addition, blockchain makes transactions transparent and limited to authorized parties, reducing fraud while delegating authority to individual stakeholders, making healthcare affordable and easy for all.

Q: Where will blockchain make the biggest impact in the next five to 10 years?

PR: I believe blockchain will have the biggest impact in healthcare and making it more patient-centric by improving security, patient care coordination, data management and access to medical care for all stakeholders.

The immutable, traceable, and transparent nature of blockchain improves and resolves many of the security issues the current system faces. As I mentioned earlier, the technology is used to decentralize patient data management, which in turn improves efficiency and therefore, overall care. Blockchain is a real-time encrypted ledger, allowing all stakeholders to be instantly updated and kept in sync with one another, and when applied, improves patient care coordination.

Access to medical care can also be eased by using blockchain solutions to reduce the transportation barrier that prevents many people from setting and keeping medical appointments. Solve.Care has partnered with transportation giants Uber and Lyft to integrate Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) into the medical appointment setting process, providing rides for patients who may have limited other options. My belief is that blockchain technology will continue to be implemented to resolve these key pain points and improve patient care overall.

Q: How can hospital executives looking to adopt/invest in blockchain get started?

PR: Hospital executives must first decide what pain points in care administration and coordination they would like to alleviate. They can also look at ongoing use cases that show the benefit of implementing this technology. Solve.Care client Arizona Care Network (ACN) began using our blockchain-based provider rewards program in 2018 because they were finding it difficult to accurately track and reward providers for patient outcomes. As a result of implementing our blockchain-based solution, their providers can now more efficiently administer and coordinate healthcare processes, improving population health.

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