Care Delivery Goes Digital

6 Trends Impacting Healthcare and 2017 Predictions

MENTORMATE

mentormate.com | 3036 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55408 | 855-577-1671

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Contributors

An industry veteran of over 15 years, MentorMate meets complex business challenges with native, hybrid, cross-platform and custom software development. Working from seven offices in Minnesota, Sweden and Bulgaria, our strategists, designers, architects, developers and quality assurance engineers blend offshore economy with onshore flexibility delivering value for clients near and far. We think big, design smart and develop fast for all screens, projects and teams accelerating digital ideas

with end-to-end technology services.

Medical Alley is a global leader in enabling health technology and care organizations to innovate, succeed and influence the evolution of healthcare. By influencing policy, delivering actionable information and intelligence and connecting members with critical resources, we work to ensure that Minnesota's Medical Alley remains the world's strongest health technology community.

Forward

Emily Genco

Content Strategist,

MentorMate

Cheryl Matter

VP, Intelligence & Research,

Medical Alley Association

As healthcare leaders lean into 2017, early indicators show business will be anything but usual.

Industry players must contend with an aging population poised to increase dependency on Medicare. Meanwhile, the current political climate and future of government aid, incentives and the Affordable Care Act remain in flux.

Consumers continue to clamor for new ways to collect and access their health data.

In some ways technology aids them, at other crossroads there are barriers to realize the integrated, convenient system of assessment, delivery and payment they expect.

We spoke with healthcare experts working to improve the care experience across the ecosystem.

Looking at past learnings, present demands and future potential, MentorMate and Medical Alley Association partnered to present the 6 trends poised to help redefine the care experience in 2017.

> “Consumers are expecting the same experience from healthcare as they are getting when they watch a movie, when they get their hair cut and when they go to the restaurant down the street: they want a personalized experience, on their own terms.”

Jen Swanson

Sr. Director, Digital Product Management,
Optum Consumer Experience Group

01. Consumers drive their healthcare experiences.

Consumers drive their healthcare experiences.

Modern healthcare consumers are used to being in control.

They can watch their favorite shows whenever they want, on whatever screen they want thanks to a variety of competitive streaming services. They can purchase products without ever setting foot in a brick and mortar store.

Healthcare has long sought to fit consumers into systems and models that made sense for providers and payers.

Industry experts recognize the disconnect. If consumers can exercise agency, customizing experiences in nearly every other transaction from banking to e-commerce, why not healthcare?

2017 will be the year the context of healthcare adapts.

Due to the high-deductible plans many employers have adopted, consumers are responsible for a larger percentage of care costs. Now more than ever, they are incentivized to actively participate in the co-management of their care. Opportunity exists for healthcare players who recognize and serve their need for user agency.

> "The challenge for healthcare is no different than retail, or any other industry, and it's, 'Know thy customer' and knowing that they don't fit into a single consumer profile – they want to be engaged as an individual."

Jen Swanson

Sr. Director, Digital Product Management,
Optum Consumer Experience Group

2017 Predictions

Providers must offer as much autonomy or support as consumers need.

There is no average when it comes to healthcare. Some consumer groups will have access to advanced technologies to manage their care. Others will struggle to satisfy basic needs, let alone log into a portal to review test results. Opportunity exists for the businesses who are able to design around the needs of the audiences they serve.

Healthcare consumers participate in experience design.

Some advocates like Glafira Marcon, Healthcare.mn Lead Organizer, believe the best way to design for the consumer is to involve them in the creation process, a best practice received well in international health and development.

Industry Perspective

> “Patient engagement is critical and in the coming years payers, providers and health technology companies will redefine relationships with patients and customers through technology”

Mike Ryan,

Senior IT Director, Medtronic

02. The context of care adapts to fit the consumer.

The context of care adapts to fit the consumer.

2017 will be the year healthcare continues to refactor existing systems and processes to meet the consumer where they want to interact.

Smartphones are nearly ubiquitous, and increasingly less expensive diagnostic and sensor technologies enable a wider array of services to be consumed remotely. In addition, startups like Retrace Health are changing the care delivery paradigm prioritizing convenience and cost with home health visits. These changes allow for care to be more distributed and independent from place, time and people.

More players are recognizing consumer agency and creating solutions that cater to a variety of consumption options.
Patients now have more options to look outside of traditional care providers to address health needs.

Behavioral health startup, LearntoLive is upending care for depression, anxiety and stress.
Using clinically-validated approaches the platform provides online tools for patient self-diagnosis and treatment. This shift is not lost on payers. BCBS led LearntoLive's latest investment round seeing an opportunity to provide patients with options that are less costly and more convenient.

Patients want healthcare when, where and how it works for them. Now the question…
Who will win in delivering the new patient experience?

2017 Predictions

Care options will diversify.

Providers will provide engagement options for patients based on preferred modes of behavioral interaction.

Patients can access care in microinteractions.

Care delivery will also see continued digital disruption beyond what telemedicine can offer. More will be delivered in microinteractions based on personal, patient availability. Apps like POPS! Diabetes Care allow patients to discretely test blood glucose levels throughout the day using an integrated blood glucose meter connected by their smartphones via Bluetooth. Patients receive mobile alerts to test. Results can be viewed by providers and discussed to maintain lifestyle choices or improve them.

Integrated data will broaden consumer options.

Data integration will play a significant role in the ability to tailor care to individual preferences. Sara Ratner, SVP Compliance and Corporate Systems for RedBrick Health, likened the potential for data integration to the flexibility offered by modern banking. Customers aren't responsible for coordinating their own data or even serving as the go-between shuttling information between partners. But, they can access centralized materials in-person or remotely (depending on preference) to make financial, family or investment decisions.

> "In any other industry, there's a free flow of information that's not hampered by technology, rather technology helps assist it. In healthcare, it's the opposite, because technology is facilitating the access of information. It's forcing the patient to become the central point of distribution, a role to which they are not accustomed, rather than having technology integrate."

Sara Ratner

SVP Compliance and Corporate Systems, RedBrick Health

Industry Perspective

> "To really lower costs across the system and allow a lot of people to take better control of their own health, they need to have access to their own healthcare information. We need better infrastructure to support people trying to accomplish that."

Jeffrey Blank
Managing Director, TreeHouse Health

03. Healthcare gets personal.

Healthcare gets personal.

Healthcare has traditionally looked to large populations to source insights meaningful in treating smaller groups of people.

This is exemplified by the drug approval process. As healthcare data analysis becomes more meaningful, population health will continue to play a significant role in treatment. However, the experts in our sample predict increased attention to genetic variability and social determinants indicate an industry-wide migration to intensely personal care experiences designed to treat a specific patient, holistically, rather than as a member of a population.

For many of the experts in our sample group, this means looking beyond a patient's condition and integrating the full view of their lifestyle and wellness choices that may be influencing the successful delivery of care.

As evidence of the shift, others point to the decreasing cost of genomic analysis allowing providers to hone in on DNA variability that may make one treatment more impactful.

By creating a picture of each patient and not his/her disease, providers will better understand the variables impacting treatment and optimize strategies to position all for success.

What's driving the move toward personalization?

+ Access to patient-generated health data
+ Patients' ability to engage with care through mobile devices
+ Decreasing costs of genomic analysis and use in provider systems
+ Increased ability to integrate data

Industry Perspective

> "If a provider is attempting to improve the medication adherence of a patient, they must make sure the patient has food every day and a consistent place to live, or they are not going to focus on their medication. Using Maslow's hierarchy as an example, we really need to focus on creating a foundation first. On top of that, patients can build a healthier life."

Glafira Marcon

Lead Organizer, Healthcare.mn

2017 Predictions

Care delivery specifies.

In the coming years, providers will look at the fundamental fabric of the patient from genomic makeup to social determinants like housing stability and family situation when assigning care.

Coordinators support patients.

In the current system, patients must serve as the axis of information, collecting and dispersing it to a variety of specialists working on their case. Sara Ratner sees case workers serving as information hubs in the more distant future — alleviating the burden of organization/distribution from providers and patients allowing them to focus on designing and delivering care.

Industry Perspective

> “There needs to be some system that is independent of the providers, and general health care system, to facilitate care coordination rather than putting the burden on the providers.”

Sara Ratner,

SVP Compliance and Corporate Systems, RedBrick Health

04. Technology companies hasten the move into healthcare.

Technology companies hasten the move into healthcare.

The US healthcare industry has been relatively shielded from the technology transformation led by consumer brands like Google, Apple, IBM, Microsoft, Samsung and Amazon.

Consumer technology companies fundamentally changed our expectations, adding value and integrating nearly every aspect of our daily lives — from how we shop to how we join a meeting. Increasingly, patients are demanding this same experience in healthcare and traditional technology companies are making big bets on their ability to integrate tech platforms, analytics and most importantly UX into digital health tools that will provide consumers a more complete, accessible picture of their health data.

However, moving into healthcare for tech companies won't be easy, and they will need partners. The US healthcare system is complicated and regulated by a web of state and federal laws.

Increasingly, partnerships are forming between companies to leverage expertise. Tech companies are looking to leading payers and provider systems to inform and support development of platforms and apps. Provider organizations like Mayo Clinic, Stanford Health, Oxford, UCLA and Partners Health among many others have already signed on develop the next generation of personalized solutions. Not to be left out, payers like Aetna, BCBS and Kaiser Permanente are increasingly looking at ways to use tech to drive outcomes and reduce costs.

Industry Perspective

> "Health related organizations [payers, providers, health technology] increasingly look to ownership of the patient relationship for future success. The big question is whether health-related companies can garner enough trust. Technology companies already do: customers exchange data for value and convenience everyday."

Kunjorn Chambundabongse

VP Innovation and R&D, United Health Group

2017 Predictions

Patients will gravitate toward convenience.

Technology companies are uniquely positioned to offer healthcare brands access to consumers. Many already look to mobile devices to aggregate or track health data. Patients as consumers will move closer to technology brands with established trust and affordability positioning them for leadership in growing wellness and therapy choices.

Partnership structure will diversify.

Volume to value shift in healthcare will drive partnerships among traditional and non-traditional entities that allow leveraging multiple products and technologies to deliver outcomes and improve experience and quality of care.

Industry Perspective

> "Partnerships to deliver value along the continuum of care will increase. Successful companies will provide more than just a widget; they will leverage multiple technologies and services, for a defined cohort, to deliver outcomes in shared risk business models."

Sheri Dodd

VP/GM of Medtronic Care Management Services, Medtronic

05. Show me the money.

Show me the money.

Who is going to pay for it?

That question has been easy for some digital health companies to answer but tough to realize. Demonstrating and capturing value within the nebulous healthcare ecosystem has made creating viable business models elusive. In March 2016, Medicare announced it will reimburse for a diabetes prevention program administered by digital health company, Omada Health. This marked a major milestone and perhaps a tipping point in payer adoption and reimbursement for preventative patient behavior apps, but it wasn't easy.

Increasingly, payers are looking to digital health tools as a way to access data and incent behavior change.

Aetna made news in September when they announced they will subsidize the Apple Watch. This is the first US insurer deal and is likely a first step in a much larger initiative to develop and deploy apps that will result in improvements to the patient experience and outcomes. From simplifying benefits and payments to improving medication adherence and encouraging fitness, this is an example of payer participation in the changing experience of care.

As healthcare costs in the US continue to rise, population health management and chronic disease management will be increasingly important to payers.

Payers want more than data. Make no mistake quantitative evidence demonstrating the value of your solution is critical. However, so is demonstrating an understanding of the patient and their experience engaging with your solution as well as strategic objectives, budget cycles, competitors, ability to scale and the complexity of the environment. There is a path but it is narrow and not yet well-traveled.

Industry Perspective

> "Patient engagement is the biggest problem facing chronic care today so we will see big bets made on developing and adapting technology to behavior change applications that create better outcomes."

Scott Nelson,

CEO/CTO Reuleaux Technology

2017 Predictions

Payers increase adoption of digital health tools.

With costly chronic disease on the rise payers look to tools that influence behavior and help patients live a healthier life as an opportunity to stem the rising cost of care.

Companies will go at risk for patient outcomes.

A huge wave of organizations are coming forward with new technologies and solutions that claim to deliver cost reductions, improved outcomes and enhanced patient experience. With so many options, payers and providers will increasingly demand companies demonstrate results and share risk to drive adoption of new solutions.

06. The search continues for interoperability.

The search continues for interoperability.

Players in healthcare today live in a climate of simultaneous overload and enlightenment.

Users produce reams of health data — from wearables, to medical devices and even social media interactions. Yet, businesses still struggle to pull the signal from the noise and leverage consumer-generated data to shape care on a wide scale. Beyond that, a lack of consensus exists: Where will the data live and who will have access to it?

The ground swell of emerging entities putting forward narrowly-focused solutions presents an adoption challenge for large customers like payers and providers with legacy processes and systems.

Integrating one new technology can present a massive challenge, but integrating multiple might be more than they are willing to take on. For consumers, Apple’s release of HealthKit, a platform to store and share data from various sources with providers, is a step to centralize patient-generated data and facilitate transfer. However, questions about authentications remain. If consumer data is increasingly aggregated and shared via mobile device, how can you be sure the collected data belongs to the device owner?

Industry Perspective

> “Somehow, we need to solve the Gordian knot of authenticating user health data on consumer devices. Given Apple’s work in the area, there is a strong possibility that answer lies in a mobile fingerprint.”

Björn Stansvik
CEO, MentorMate

2017 Predictions

Consolidation will deliver more comprehensive and coherent offerings.

Shifting the burden of integrating technologies and providing end-to-end solutions supports market adoption for innovative digital health solutions.

Health informatics and monitoring capabilities will increase and centralize.

As integration and utilization of patient health data increases so to will the need for management, monitoring and analytic capabilities.

Democratization of data will change relationships.

Unlike other industries, in healthcare data asymmetry is prevalent. Patients currently have limited access for their health data. As this information becomes more transparent, accessible and integrated, patient engagement with the broader health community (payers, providers and caregivers) will change.

Relationships will become more important.

The dynamics between patients and doctors, patients and payers, as well as patients and their social networks will shift.

> "I think there's going to be a big debate in 2017 about how we keep people at the focus of the healthcare system, rather than just technology and data. I believe relationships are key to good health, especially understanding what care means to each person."

Glafira Marcon

Lead Organizer, Healthcare.mn

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