



## Simple But **Powerful Solutions** That Produce **Results**

### **EARLY DETECTION Must be a Top Priority For ACOs and Value Based Programs**

**April 2015**

Early detection of acute illness is a critical for providers interested in risk sharing arrangements and value-based care. ACOs and other population health initiatives need systems which support earlier detection and earlier treatment for illness episodes which carry the risk of requiring costly ER and inpatient care.

The concept of "early detection" applies to any illness episode that has the potential of needing ER and/or inpatient care. The majority of such illness episodes occur in the population already identified as having one or more chronic disease.

#### **What Needs to be Done?**

Your ambulatory delivery system needs to be enhanced to provide earlier and better access to treatment for patients at the earliest possible stage of an acute illness episode. The goal is to prevent the illness from progressing to a stage requiring ER visits and hospital admission.

We find that providers and organizations in the early stages of their accountable care journey often miss the importance and complexity of the patient access and communication process. Regular communication between the patient and their usual provider and appointment access to that provider are critical to preventing ER visits and hospital admissions.

COPD is one example. Essentially all patients with chronic illness are at risk for an episode of illness capable of generating ER and inpatient costs. (see sidebar)

#### **The Challenge**

"Enhanced early detection systems to prevent these 'avoidable' admissions are absolutely essential to the success ACO and other value based initiatives.

For a 25,000 beneficiary ACO you'll need to prevent about 20% of your patients' emergency room visits and about 15% of their hospital admissions to achieve savings of 4.6% and trigger gain sharing."

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#### **Case Study: Mrs. Green**

Consider Mrs. Green with COPD who develops a minor increase in pulmonary symptoms.

Her illness has the real potential to lead to hospitalization (and possibly ending up in the ICU on a ventilator).

Successful intervention requires that:

- Mrs. Green knows when and how to ask for advice.
- Her request for advice receives a quick and consistent response, 24/7.
- The assessment and advice be correct.
- A same-day appointment be available with an

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## We Can Help

Hindin Healthcare Advisors and its partner Zolo Healthcare solutions can help you assess the changes that are needed in your primary care system and create a roadmap with the changes sequenced and prioritized.

We have extensive experience in the support of population health management and ACO development including the design, organization, readiness assessment, application and operational phases. In addition to being a trusted advisor, our team can provide the roadmap and program design for case management, UM, readmission reduction, primary care access and communication, post-acute care, operational performance dashboard, evaluation of technology solutions, and systems that lead to avoidance of serious illness episodes, etc.

We have helped organizations with execution by deploying skills and systems for providing sustainable and efficient value based care and by building working partnerships between management and physicians.

Our consulting team is made up exclusively of senior leaders who have extensive hands-on experience at the country's top integrated delivery systems. This experience, inside health care organizations, enables us to rapidly assess and accurately diagnose your situation, develop actionable plans that work, and provide implementation assistance and adjustments as you progress. That's Our Advantage

appropriate provider if it is needed.

Implementing these steps will require a thoughtful assessment of your organization's current capabilities at the correct choice of options for improvement.

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**Contact Deb Lowry or me for a telephone consultation,**

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