

Healthcare Delivery in a Broadband World

BROADBAND IS DRAMATICALLY TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE

HEALTHCARE IS IN A STATE OF RAPID TRANSFORMATION

The emergence of new technologies and platforms has accelerated since the onset of COVID-19, as pandemic-driven behavior has compelled the healthcare industry to rethink how it delivers services in low-touch and virtual settings.

Healthcare is now an experience-focused retail industry, where both providers and payers need to compete for informed and empowered healthcare consumers in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The use of technology and data within clinical and wellness settings is evolving. What will be the driving force for this change moving forward? Will it be new medical devices to track our health remotely? Will it be finding new ways to perform medical research with globally dispersed teams? Will it be promoting the benefits of health-focused products, services and behaviors to an increasingly broad audience?

The answer is “Yes” to each of these, with a common thread – broadband-enabled connectivity. Healthcare has evolved from a relatively closed ecosystem with high switching costs to a highly competitive marketplace where success demands the ability to both digitally engage consumers in innovative ways and deliver care through low-touch and virtual settings.

This evolution towards broadband-enabled engagement and delivery means that both payers and providers need to look outside their traditional healthcare boundaries for lessons learned on how to make this jump effectively.

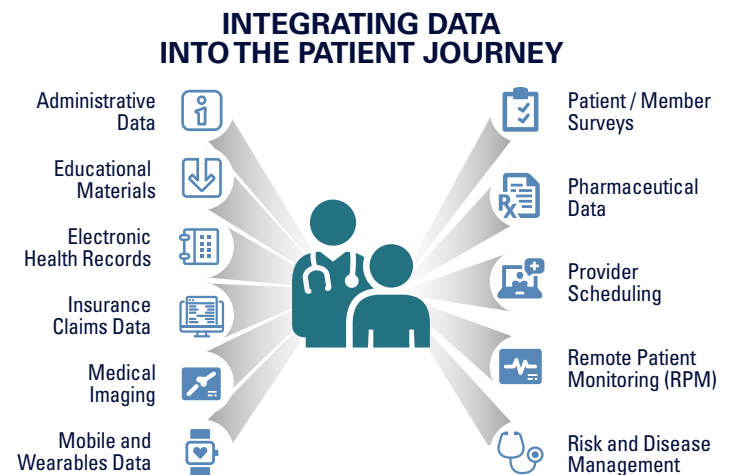
U.S. HEALTH IS SUPPORTED BY BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

Healthcare’s evolution and continual innovation is dependent on the ongoing development and effective use of broadband capabilities. Virtual healthcare delivery has minimized geographic proximity to caregivers as a barrier to access.

While not all healthcare activities can be provided virtually, many services can now be provided to patients in the comfort of their own home. No longer does a patient with congestive heart failure have to be monitored from a hospital bed. No longer does a mother in a rural community have to drive two hours to the specialist for a routine follow-up exam. Virtual care utilized in appropriate scenarios enables fast, efficient and effective delivery of care, saving time and money for patients and healthcare providers.

BETTER OUTCOMES THROUGH DATA-INFORMED CARE

Access and integration of a patient’s healthcare data has also equipped healthcare providers and insurers with the ability to manage current and predict future health issues. As more and more healthcare data is being trusted to the cloud, remote access to this information makes easier the ability to analyze this data to find trends and identify high risk patients or dangerous drug interactions before life-threatening episodes occur.



Knowing the “little things” about a patient like the preferred way to be communicated with (phone vs. text) or even a favorite meal while in the hospital can make all the difference in a patient’s outlook and willingness to actively participate with a clinical team in a positive way.

IMPROVED BROADBAND CAPABILITIES HAVE INCREASED QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE DELIVERY

Broadband has dramatically increased the ability to deliver health-related educational content to individuals uninformed or misinformed. The effective integration of digital health and wellness content into virtual care platforms can serve to directly communicate with patients, delivering accurate and useful information and cutting through the clutter of misinformation on various social media platforms.

Providing health-focused content empowers healthcare consumers and provides the opportunity for an improved relationship with the healthcare organizations that support them. Identifying, personalizing and efficiently distributing content educates consumers and can move the needle toward healthier lifestyles and outcomes. Providing dietary and exercise advice to a pre-diabetic individual with limited access to in-person healthcare can change behavior to avoid full-blown diabetes. Providing information on healthy lifestyle choices to a youth can put him or her on a path to long-term health. Putting health-related content into the hands of a broader online audience by healthcare providers, health insurers or other organizations can help the population as a whole, all of which is powered by broadband connectivity.

TAKING A CUE FROM THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIGITAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES DELIVERY

RETHINKING DELIVERY OF HEALTH & WELLNESS SERVICES

The healthcare industry can also look to the broadband and digital services sector for some important cues on ways to re-think how it engages patients in the delivery of health and wellness services.

As telehealth and virtual care become critical components to the expansion and durability of healthcare access, providers and payers must transform how they engage consumers and embrace the adoption of new digital services and solutions. Enabling consumers to effectively and easily engage with the provider and payer community will be critical to the success or failure of the future of virtual and remote healthcare.

The digital services industry has gone through a similar evolution over the last twenty years, as technological innovation, increased competition, and heightened knowledge has increased the power of the consumer. Top players in the digital services sector such as Google, Comcast and AT&T/DirectTV have been forced to transform their businesses to effectively engage consumers and deliver services and experiences to the home digitally. This delivery has been reliant on an integration of hardware, software and ultra- fast broadband connectivity.

These players in the broadband ecosystem have had to evolve their business models from the transactional sale of simple, non-complex services through traditional channels to a more holistic, integrated and personalized relationship-based way

of engaging consumers as their product portfolio became increasingly complex and interactive. This transformation has forced these providers to innovate dramatically in how they engage consumers digitally and create holistic and seamless experiences that span channels and service touch points.

The healthcare industry is currently undergoing a similar transformation. Two decades ago, healthcare was typically delivered through a series of loosely connected, episodic interactions and treatments, often provided reactively to a diagnosed condition. Wellness and preventive care were just beginning to emerge as meaningful components of the physician- patient relationship, and often involved little more than a discussion at the annual physical.

We are now seeing an evolution in healthcare from a focus on providing discrete services to delivering holistic, persistent and personalized experiences. The rise of big data, broadband connectivity, digital enablement and engagement, and telehealth has transformed the ways that both payers and providers can engage patients and provide better care. Both providers and payers need to compete for informed and empowered healthcare consumers in an increasingly competitive marketplace, where consumers expect and demand seamless, personalized care delivered to them in real-time, on their terms, where and how they want it.

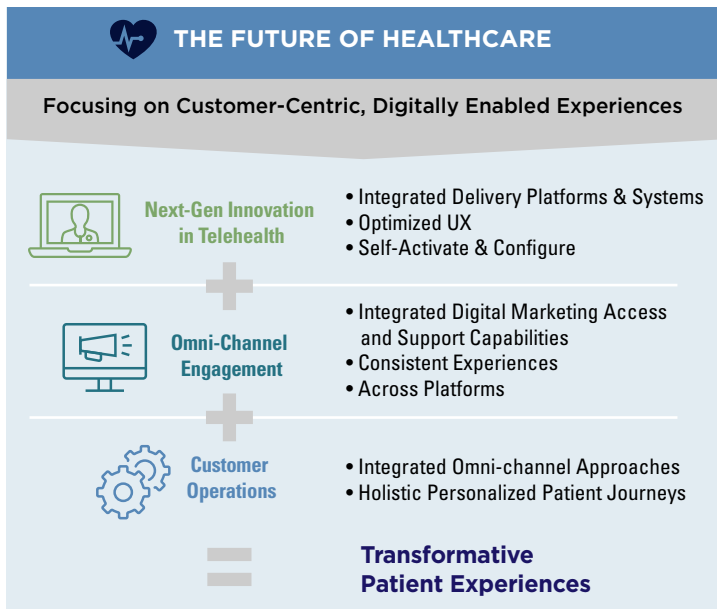


The graphic above illustrates the similar paths that the digital services and healthcare industries have taken over the last two decades and where this evolution is headed, in terms what will differentiate the winners from the losers over the next decade, based on the types of capabilities and experiences they can deliver in the marketplace. The winners in this new healthcare marketplace are those that can create personalized, integrated and holistic user experiences, delivered across an array of interconnected digital and physical interactions.

CREATING INTEGRATED, PERSONALIZED AND HOLISTIC PATIENT JOURNEYS

Creating compelling patient journeys that bring together interactions between providers, payers and patients will require a complete rethinking of how business processes integrate. The goal must be to create holistic, personalized experiences and interconnect these experiences in a way that transform the relationship between patient, provider and payer and creates meaningful and sustainable competitive advantage in the healthcare marketplace.

Specifically, healthcare players must create a fully integrated patient engagement platform that combines new telehealth capabilities with an integrated omni-channel approach to customer care and patient engagement, all underpinned by a coordinated multi-platform approach to data management.



By combining next-gen innovation in telehealth, omni-channel engagement and customer operations, both providers and payers can knit together currently disparate interactions and touch points to create innovative “next-gen” healthcare patient journeys that:

- Transform traditional provider-patient and payer-member relationships to inspire loyalty and improve profitability
- Enable deeper, more holistic, higher frequency, lower cost patient/member engagements and interactions
- Deliver world-class wellness and healthcare to more convenient and lower cost environments through virtualization and digital enablement
- Allow for personalized and frictionless experiences that better enable patients to manage their own health, deliver superior care outcomes, and lower care costs.

Additionally, the healthcare industry must learn how to embrace the digital delivery of health and wellness services not only in

the home, but on the go and in rural, under served communities without available traditional medical facilities. To be effective, these new digital platforms and capabilities must embrace a completely new approach to patient engagement and access/service. Consumers in the digital age expect and demand transparency, control and simplicity in how they interact with both providers and payers. They want to be served how and where it is most convenient, spanning both digital and traditional healthcare delivery and customer service settings.

The companies that best achieve this vision will deliver personalized and frictionless experiences that better enable patients to manage their own health and wellness, deliver superior care outcomes, and improve business efficiency, simultaneously improving profitability and engendering greater healthcare consumer loyalty. This will require both providers and payers to create new interconnected multi-platform approaches to customer care, where all healthcare experiences are informed by and contribute to an integrated ecosystem. This system would combine traditional EHR/EMR capabilities with new digital marketing and engagement tools and CRM capabilities to create customer-centric pathways for care, support and service.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

For the healthcare consumer, it means being open to change and embracing new ways to interact with healthcare providers, insurers and technologies. For companies involved in the delivery of healthcare or wellness – health systems, health insurers, healthcare technology firms – it means being aware of the need to continually improve connectivity and capabilities for healthcare consumers you serve, knowing that consumer expectations will continually evolve.

Healthcare is now an experience-focused retail industry. Healthcare companies need strategic partners who can help gauge consumer expectations and support the fast delivery of capabilities to meet these expectations. The partners best positioned to provide this support are those organizations that have worked not only in the healthcare industry, but also in consumer-focused industries that have experienced a similar evolution to a customer journey-centric approach. Lessons learned from these industry partners can be a significant competitive advantage for any healthcare organization that chooses to embrace and build on these.

For more information about how Sand Cherry Health can help, please visit us at www.sandcherryassociates.com or contact us at shealth@sandcherryassociates.com or (303) 933-9494, x3