



MEDITECH blazes yet another innovative trail, this time with patient-generated data

Validic digital-health platform enables MEDITECH clients to leverage data to improve clinical care

Early in 2015, Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, made the following statement in a press release: “Whether you are a patient, a provider, a business, a health plan or a taxpayer, it is in our common interest to build a healthcare system that delivers better care, spends healthcare dollars more wisely and results in healthier people.”¹



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Even though Burwell made this declaration in response to the healthcare industry’s move toward value-based care, MEDITECH, an electronic health records (EHR) company based in Westwood, Mass., has led the industry in support of such an ideal for quite some time. In fact, MEDITECH was founded with providing higher-quality care as its driving force – and that remains the company’s primary focus today.

“We have cared about quality of care before it was in vogue to do such,” said Helen Waters, vice president of sales and marketing at MEDITECH. The company was launched in 1969 by A. Neil Pappalardo, a visionary who ignited the EHR industry. While working at Massachusetts General Hospital, he cultivated his interest in – and developed his undying passion for – clinical computing. Not surprisingly, with Pappalardo at the helm, the EHR vendor has spent the past 40-plus years pushing the clinical information technology envelope.

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VP, Sales and Marketing
MEDITECH

“We have spent a lifetime bringing automation and clinical sophistication to healthcare facilities all over the world, helping them deliver care with confidence,” Waters said, adding that MEDITECH has achieved this by developing innovative EHRs and technology solutions for a variety of organizations – from ambulatory clinics to hospitals to long-term care providers and more.

The next innovation: consumer-level interface

Now, as the industry is adopting new care models, MEDITECH is once again focused on innovation in the name of improved clinical outcomes and efficiency. More specifically, the pioneering company is making its EHR more powerful by leveraging digital-health data to meet the goals of the triple aim: enhanced patient care experiences, improved clinical care and reduced costs.

To accomplish this, MEDITECH is bringing what company leaders describe as a “consumer-level interface” to its EHR. “We are writing new chapters in the MEDITECH story, but also new chapters in the EHR market, which has historically struggled with the usability factor. Our customers and physicians in particular are very excited. They no longer have to click and scroll through the system. It is just so much more intuitive now,” Waters said.

In addition, MEDITECH is bringing more meaningful data into the system to help clinicians deliver better care to patients. Ultimately, access to this information will help healthcare organizations avoid readmissions, decrease the number of hospital-acquired conditions and improve outcomes.

Creating connections with digital-health technology

To make this happen, MEDITECH is integrating its system with many other clinical-care systems. It is also integrating with a variety of digital-health devices, such as fitness trackers, blood-pressure monitors and other technologies designed to help patients track various parameters of their health. A significant part of this initiative involves connecting with – and gathering data directly from – patients who are using these mobile devices and applications.

“Incorporating patient-generated health data into the EHR is a natural evolution for us. We want our clinical users to identify the patients who are doing well and keep them engaged. We want our clinicians to be ahead of the patients who are not doing well,” and provide them with needed services in a timely manner, Waters pointed out.

While extremely valuable, getting patient-generated data integrated into the EHR is a formidable challenge. To successfully deliver on its “connected-patient” goals, MEDITECH leaders realized that the company would need to find a viable means to connect its system to the burgeoning number of devices and applications that patients are using to track and monitor their health. And, of course, the fact that there are literally thousands of devices in use makes such connectivity a challenge.

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“The use of digital-health devices is very vast and robust. However, the formatting and sharing of this incoming data is not uniform or consistent among the various devices and applications,” Waters said. “The greatest challenge for us and for the industry as a whole is the integration of all of this [disparate] health data.”

With the need to connect to so many devices, leaders quickly concluded that constructing and maintaining one-to-one connections with each and every device would quickly cripple the initiative. “The point-to-point connectivity with individual device vendors is not a good sustainable model for us or for our customers. Quite honestly, our customers are looking for more simplification on this front – and in general across healthcare – not more complexity,” Waters explained.

As such, MEDITECH leaders searched for a one-to-many connectivity platform that would be able to aggregate, standardize and share valuable data with the EHR in an accessible, meaningful way. After reviewing options, MEDITECH chose to leverage Validic’s industry-leading digital-health platform based on its ability to simplify connectivity and to seamlessly gather data from a wide variety of digital-health technologies.

Indeed, Validic stood out because the company’s platform already integrates with more than 200 devices, wearables and apps. The platform also standardizes and normalizes the data in an easily digestible format for healthcare technology systems. As soon as it enters the system, it is actionable for healthcare providers. “Validic quickly became the clear front-runner, given their breadth of device and application connections, as well as their proven success and track record,” Waters said. “In addition, their commitment to grow their marketplace as more devices become available and our comfort level with the business partnership was important. They have a number of significant happy customers and their footprint is fairly considerable in the global healthcare space.”

Experiencing the benefits of patient-generated data

Certainly, the ability to integrate patient-generated data adds significant clinical muscle to the MEDITECH EHR. Most notably, with all of this patient information flowing into the system, clinicians will be able to help patients better manage their care.

“Doctors and nurses who use the MEDITECH system will have access to holistic patient information, making it possible for them to better monitor patient conditions and make changes in advance of [patients] moving in the wrong direction,” Waters said. “We’re ensuring that we are meeting our ultimate goal of delivering the best quality care by providing the most informed level of information for a clinician to make good decisions. Accessing all of the lifestyle data and the specific monitoring data such as weight, blood pressure and Hba1Cs – as well as the ability to track this information accurately and consistently – simply [empowers] clinicians to do more.”

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And, it’s a solid move in the right direction as the need to manage patients remotely is growing – not only because of an aging population but also because of the increasing prevalence of chronic conditions. “Life is busy for people. If they have a chronic condition and can passively monitor using a connected device,” then they will likely want to do so, Waters said.

Such remote care not only offers convenience to patients but also efficiencies that will reduce costs across the healthcare system. “With patient-generated health data and home monitoring, we’re going to make the system more efficient and cost-effective by not requiring people to always be in physicians’ offices to receive clinical care,” Waters said.

With the integration of this patient-generated data from Validic into the MEDITECH EHR, healthcare providers will be in a position to make good on Secretary Mathews Burwell’s vision of a healthcare system that “spends healthcare dollars more wisely and results in healthier people.”

References

1. Press Release. Better, Smarter, Healthier: In historic announcement, HHS sets clear goals and timeline for shifting Medicare reimbursements from volume to value. Accessed at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2015pres/01/20150126a.html>

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About MEDITECH

Today, more than 2,300 institutions worldwide use MEDITECH’s fully integrated, interoperable EHR to provide healthcare to the communities they serve. Their robust, patient-centered technology spans the healthcare continuum, including unique functional capacity for the following environments: ambulatory care, acute care, long-term care, rehabilitation services, behavioral health and home care.

About Validic

Validic is the healthcare industry’s leading cloud-based, digital-health platform. Validic provides convenient and quick access to patient data from in-home clinical devices, wearables and patient healthcare applications. By connecting its growing base of customers—that includes providers, pharmaceutical companies, payers, wellness companies and health IT vendors—to the continuously expanding list of digital-health technologies, Validic enables healthcare companies to better coordinate care across their communities, improve their patient engagement strategies and more efficiently manage their patient populations.

Validic’s innovative, scalable and FDA Class I MDDS technology delivers actionable, standardized and HIPAA-compliant consumer health data from the best in-class mobile health devices and applications. Validic was recognized for healthcare innovation by Gartner and received Frost & Sullivan’s Best Practices and Best Value in Healthcare Information Interoperability award, as well as Top Ten Healthcare Disruptor award. Validic’s leading global digital health ecosystem reaches over 160 million lives in 47 countries and continues to grow daily.

To learn more about how Validic, the industry’s leading digital-health platform, can help you successfully implement your digital-health strategy, please visit www.validic.com/contact.