

From the Desk of Christos Morris

### Can Health Care be “Uberized”? Why Nursing Needs an Uber

Uber hasn’t just revolutionized the taxi industry—it has inspired companies around the world to reconsider their business models. Uber’s concept of using technology to communicate with a decentralized workforce is applicable to countless industries, chief among them Medicine. Uber represents an app-driven labor market. Let’s explore what this could mean for at-home health care.

Nearly 90 percent of seniors want to age in place, according to AARP research. They want to live at home for as long as possible without burdening their loved ones. This is an understandable desire, but is it realistic? The “United States Registered Nurse Workforce Report Card and Shortage Forecast” projects that America will experience a shortage of registered nurses between 2009 and 2030. How will we support our aging population?

I’ve observed that the long-term care industry is trying to move away from brick and mortar settings and the costs associated with it. Envision a scenario in which a health care provider could use an app to communicate with skilled nurses, to alert them to open shifts and to allow them to fulfill their duties and upload paperwork from their phone, rather than having to return to home base. It’s simply more cost-effective for the provider to send an aide to someone’s home rather than support an eight-hour shift at a nursing home. It’s also more convenient for the worker. If we could allow nurses the same flexibility bestowed upon Uber drivers, they could supplement their incomes, or create new ones entirely. Plus, providers could more easily meet the demands of the people they serve.

Uber drivers use their own cars. They work when they want, where they want. They communicate with “headquarters” via an app. Ask an Uber driver what they think about the model (I have!) and for the most part, you’ll hear praise. I’ve met a writer, a paper salesman and a number of retirees now moonlighting with Uber to make some extra cash. They relish the flexibility. And the Uber execs? They relish the fact that their model keeps overhead costs down and makes it easier to scale. It’s no wonder other industries are taking notice.

I predict that an increasing number of businesses will embrace the mobile workforce. The technical infrastructure is already in place, and the cost-saving benefits cannot be ignored. Health care providers face a challenging landscape beset with rising costs and increased competition. Technology-based solutions could be just what we need.

– Christos G. Morris  
*Founder and CEO*

eVero Corporation provides electronic health record and case management software solutions for the Health and Human Services marketplace. We have more than a decade of experience working with developmental disability providers, and we also offer a range of managed service solutions, including professional management, enterprise cloud solutions and IT support services.