

### Tips to Help Drive Your Population Health Journey and Avoid the Potholes

It's not easy to be a healthcare provider these days. With the steady uptick in value-based healthcare delivery and payment programs, provider organizations need to simultaneously balance meeting the demands of "business as usual" with learning and applying new capabilities that, at times, are at odds with familiar ones. It's a journey with plenty of opportunities to get sidetracked.

You're going to need help, but how do you find it in a market crowded with options? Here's some advice to help you get to your destination quickly and efficiently.

# Who drives to a new destination without a GPS?

Sure, maybe if you've got a mint-condition, cherry-red '58 Corvette convertible, it's a gorgeous spring day, and you've got nothing to do and all day to get there. Start somewhere and see where the road might lead you.

But you DO care about getting to specific destinations with your population health management programs. Analytics are the GPS of your population health management initiatives, helping you understand the immediate path ahead as well as course correct as your programs advance in sophistication.



### Wait!

I've only consulted Lonely Planet, Frommer's, Yelp, TripAdvisor, Michelin ....



It **IS** possible to collect too much information before you go on your trip.

It's not easy to collect this data due to the limited adoption of transmission standards. And then consider that every data source has to be managed and maintained by separate people, according to different rules. Before you go to the time and expense to gather up and assimilate all these guidebooks, focus on obtaining and maintaining the right data to drive population analysis, program structure, program management, and ongoing assessment.

# Plane, train, or automobile? It depends, right? But one thing's for sure:

You don't need them all at once.

Providers' wish lists for their population health management

solutions look something like Santa Claus's Naughty and Nice lists. Then, the scope of the technology implementation starts to rival the size of an EMR implementation, and projects come to a screeching halt. You don't have to do everything and have everything at the start of your journey, but you do need to keep moving or you'll fall behind the competition. Understanding the amount of risk your population bears, the nature of that risk, and the best way to manage it is the first stop on a journey with many amazing sights to see along the way.



# Do you really want to eat dinner at the gas station? A lot of people, places, and things are going to make up your journey, and you'll want to pick the right ones along the way. You might be able to get some decent boiled peanuts at the gas station, for example, but you probably don't want to eat your dinner there. The population health management market is in flux, and although some vendors might tell you they have it all, you may be getting boiled peanuts when you're expecting bouillabaisse. It sounds easier to get everything you need from one source, but considering how unproven much of the market is—and how unintegrated even a single vendor's solutions might be—best-of breed may make the most sense.

## We're not implying that you're about to drive off a cliff, but every journey's better with a travel companion—well, as long as they don't snore, or hate your music, or .... If you're fresh off of a big EMR implementation, we get it. You may not want a new travel companion

Who'll be Thelma to your Louise?

longitudinal views across populations and care settings that you need to manage risk effectively. Claims data—and a vendor that knows how to use it—will help you assess utilization, total cost of care, and provider performance in ways your EMR just can't.

quite yet. But keep in mind that systems built to treat patients individually may not provide the broad,

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