

# Adversity to Opportunity:

## How Questioning the Status Quo Helps Leaders Succeed

*“The uncreative mind can spot wrong answers, but it takes a creative mind to spot wrong questions.”*

— John C. Maxwell

Leaders are charged with finding effective solutions for even seemingly intractable challenges. Yet, according to international leadership expert and New York Times bestselling author John C. Maxwell, leaders are often so focused on finding answers that they miss opportunities to maximize progress. Truly insightful leaders, he says, ask the right questions:

- Why must it be done this way?
- What are the underlying issues?
- Who has a different perspective on this?

For healthcare leaders, asking the right questions is especially challenging when wrestling with the moving target of regulatory compliance. But creative thinkers – like the three highlighted below – succeed by daring to question entrenched practices and becoming agents for change.

### Eliminating operational vulnerabilities

Realizing that their paper system for record reviews was onerous and time consuming, VNA Health at Home, Inc. of Watertown, Connecticut, set out to find a better way to identify and address non-compliance issues. Their answer: SMARTAUDIT®, a web-based survey readiness tool that helps home health and hospice agencies navigate the regulatory environment. “SMARTAUDIT’s reports tell us not only how compliant an individual patient record is from a percentage standpoint – 80%, 90%, etc. – but more importantly in what areas it is not,” said Mary Mitchell, Director of Quality. “We can then drill down in the record, read comments, analyze processes, determine where staff education is needed and develop a plan of correction.”

### Leveraging operational controls to drive growth

As a fast-growing Pennsylvania agency in an integrated delivery network, Pennsylvania-based Healthcare@Home worked with 5-10 medical supply companies fulfilling 1000+ orders per month. “It was clear we needed clinical guidelines on ordering and standardization of care,” said Healthcare@Home President William Gammie. In July 2015, the agency

consolidated to one medical supplier, Medline. “The Medline team seamlessly integrated their ordering platform with our EMR program, and developed a rules-based formulary to streamline clinical guidance and standardization,” Gammie says. “In the first five months, 61% of orders were blocked – often resulting in changes to more appropriate products or reductions to eliminate waste. And we can also drill down to the nurse and patient level to analyze orders and costs, giving us even more opportunity to control our spend.”

### Reducing Readmissions

With a majority of U.S hospitals being penalized by Medicare for excessive readmission rates, East Coast-based Valley Health systems posed a key question: How could they help referral partners achieve their goals while meeting the needs of patients? The solution, implemented by Community Liaison for Valley Health Patti Brown RN, BSN, is Medline’s SmartCare™ program – a patient-focused concierge care model designed to keep patients safe in their home and reduce return trips to the hospital. “SmartCare allows us to create individualized care,” Brown said. “We determine the interaction each patient receives from the care center, such as medication tracking, physician appointments and key contacts. To date, SmartCare has helped us avoid 48 readmissions for a total savings of more than \$451,000 in healthcare costs.”

Breaking away from the business-as-usual mentality can be uncomfortable, and leaders may encounter resistance to their efforts to “rock the boat.” But, advises Maxwell, a willingness to question the status quo is the hallmark of a dynamic leader and an essential ingredient in the success of the organizations they lead.

### Medline



Our services include programs designed to improve an agency’s overall clinical, operational, and financial outcome. Programs designed to meet the needs brought on by OASIS-C, CAHPS, and QAPI are now featured as value added additions to our overall supply management system. Medline HomeCare is committed to providing the highest quality medical products along with the most comprehensive clinical support programs available to the Home Care and Hospice community. **866-356-4997 [www.medline.com](http://www.medline.com)**

# How Leaders Are Optimizing Telehealth to Reduce Readmissions

Great leaders are using telehealth to innovate and transform their organizations. Let us share case studies with you to illustrate how user-friendly technology platforms are reducing readmissions, engaging patients and optimizing outcomes.

## Case Studies

FirstHealth of The Carolinas has achieved a 53% reduction in hospital readmissions using their own Complex Care Management Model (CCM) and PatientConnect, the patient engagement solution from Health Recovery Solutions (HRS). In a study of 220 high risk heart failure, COPD, and diabetes patients, from September 2015 through May 2016, utilization and the cost of care was tracked across all payer groups. A 53% reduction in hospital readmissions was demonstrated by comparing the hospitalization rate for the 6 months prior to the CCM intervention with the hospitalization rate for the 6 months following the CCM intervention. The rate was reduced from 1.7 at baseline to only 0.8 after the CCM intervention. The study reflected a savings of \$1.9M in cost avoidance for the payers.

In another randomized, 50 patient study at Hackensack University Medical Center and Holy Name Medical Center, HRS achieved an 8% readmission rate of patients who received our tablet, compared to a 28% readmission rate of patients who did not receive our tablet. The average patient was 71 years old and had an ejection fraction below 40%. (Published in the Journal of Nursing Care).

A 4.5 Star rated agency teamed up with HRS to provide unique monitoring features to complement its highly rated home health services in New Hampshire for national leading results. Recently, a press release featured a "60% Decrease in CHF Readmissions: Cornerstone VNA & Health Recovery Solutions Reduce Hospital Readmissions." The state average for home care hospital readmissions in New Hampshire is 16.7% and 16% nationally. Cornerstone VNA's previous 30-day readmission rates for heart failure was 12.1%. That is a 60% reduction in CHF readmissions for patients that are on the telehealth program. The COPD patients placed on the telehealth program had a 6% 30-day readmission rate. Along with the 4.8% readmission rate, patients gave high ratings to the telehealth platform.

HRS integrated technology platforms support clinical management and patient engagement

- HRS software provides the most advanced patient monitoring devices, focusing on changing behavior to reduce readmissions and improve clinical outcomes.
- Disease-specific 4G tablets are customized for medications, educational videos and diet information while integrating with wireless Bluetooth devices.
- Tablets allow video chat, wound imaging and real time risk assessments that are monitored not only by their clinicians but also family members through mobile apps.
- Tablets offer video chat, allowing clinicians to conduct virtual visits in place of home visits, which reduce overall cost of care. Nurses are able to assess the severity of the patient's symptoms when reporting on them through video calls
- The wound imaging metric allows patients to take clear photos of their wounds/injuries/lesions/scars for clinicians to review.
- IOS and Android apps give flexibility to clinicians and caregivers for access to view their patients.

HRS was started with the belief that outpatient hospital care is as vital as inpatient hospital care. HRS utilizes education, incentives, digital tools, repetition, and consistency to motivate behavioral changes in our patients to live a healthy and responsible life style – with the main focus of engaging patients.



Health Recovery Solutions (HRS) supplies leading home care

agencies with the most advanced remote monitoring platform, focusing on changing patient behavior to reduce readmissions and improve clinical outcomes. HRS's disease specific software is customized with educational videos, care plans, and medication reminders, while integrated with wireless Bluetooth peripherals. HRS Engagement Kits allow virtual visits, wound imaging, and real-time risk alerts that are monitored by clinicians and patients' family members through mobile apps. **347-699-6477**  
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