

CENTERSTAGE

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Bettering Health Plan Management Through Modern Healthcare Technology

Taking advantage of modern technology is part of the reason why Hierl excels in providing the best results for our clients. In this installment of CenterStage, we asked our Executive Vice President, Scott Smeaton, to give an in-depth overview of **how we use our technological resources to create customized, high-quality, low-cost health plans for our clients.**

Technology and Data



There are three steps to developing plans for our clients, when using technology and data. **The first step is to identify the client's cost drivers within their health program(s).** For example, we may look at a client's claims data and find their highest dollar claims are musculoskeletal - such as hip and knee replacements - identifying whether health plan members are going to the higher cost, lower quality provider. These are becoming much more prevalent and are among most plans top cost drivers. With the technology at Hierl, we can import our client's data - medical and prescription claims and health screening results from wellness - and aggregate it into one technology platform. Doing so, will help keep our clients' members updated on physician requests and advice.

“ We can determine which members are at the highest risk for high-cost, future medical treatments, as well as which members are not following their physicians' treatment plan, i.e. not filling their prescriptions or getting their A1C. Then, we can build a health plan that creates incentives to seek out the highest quality, lowest cost providers, while reducing or eliminating any barriers to care. ”

SCOTT SMEATON

Competitive Advantage

The second step beyond identifying our client's cost drivers is to implement management programs and plan designs to address their health plan issues. This kind of technology is newer to the healthcare industry. It can be a great resource and tool that larger employers can use to their advantage. Think about Netflix. They analyze their viewer's behaviors and apply predictive modeling in a way that they know what their viewers like to watch and when they want to watch it, incorporating those preferences into the ads their customers see. That kind of technology is coming to healthcare, allowing us to look at all claims and behaviors and predict where the next large claim will come from. This helps plan administrators fully understand what's driving their health plan costs and do something about it through **plan design changes, provider relations and contracting, member incentives, and member education and engagement.**

Employee Betterment

After identifying areas that can be improved upon and creating a plan to address these cost drivers as discussed above, our third and final step is to create a communication program that will engage and educate employees. Our goal is to help employees understand that, within a healthcare system, there are some providers who perform better than others and cost less. **When we give employees the tools and resources they need to be better healthcare consumers, everyone wins.** Employer sponsored health plans have lower overall costs. This means their employees and their families lower their out-of-pocket costs, save healthcare dollars for the future, and have better outcomes. Not to mention that a happier, healthier employee is also a more productive employee at work and in the community.

Hierl accomplishes this with our **"Why Matters" program**, which is a custom designed, year-round member education and communication program using a variety of mediums to reach our clients' members. Through Why Matters, Hierl builds a custom (intranet) and mobile app for our clients to access basic information about their benefits 24/7. Think of it as a homepage to one of your favorite websites that you bookmark in your browser. This is where your members go to research, make decisions, educate themselves on your benefit offerings and how to be a better healthcare consumer. Based on the cost drivers identified through the process above we build out a 12-month calendar of communication materials specifically addressing the areas we've identified as a concern and can be delivered via paper, email, mobile app, etc.

Hierl strives to bring our clients the best possible solutions that result in high-quality, low-cost benefits. If you think your company needs to take this step toward improvement, please contact **Scott Smeaton** at **920.921.5921** or send him an email at **ssmeaton@hierl.com**.