



Medicaid patients reduce hospitalizations with WellDoc

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By Brian Dolan

At the mHealth Summit today George Washington University Center's Dr. Richard Katz presented findings of a demonstration program called DC HealthConnect. The program tested WellDoc's mobile health program DiabetesManager during a 12-month period. The results: DiabetesManager reduced ER visits and hospital stays by 58 percent on average compared to the previous year — when they weren't using the program.



The DC HealthConnect project included 32 patients recruited by Chartered Family Health Center in Washington, DC. The aim of the project was to determine what kind of impact a real-time, mobile phone-based diabetes management program would have within a Medicaid patient population. Patients who participated in the program used their own cell phones, but they were offered a monthly discount of \$20 off their phone plans.

The results of the program followed on WellDoc's randomized controlled trial (RCT) — one of the few conducted by a mobile health company to date. The results of that study were published in the ADA's medical journal Diabetes Care this past September. Here's how WellDoc summed up the results of the RCT: "In this trial, patients using the DiabetesManager plus their usual care had an average decline in A1C of 1.9 percentage points compared to a 0.7-percentage-point decline seen among patients treated with usual care alone, regardless of starting baseline A1C."

More on WellDoc's latest efficacy study in the press release below:

[The WellDoc DiabetesManager Cuts Hospital and ER Visits in Half](#)

[Real-world Demonstration Results to be Presented at mHealth Summit](#)

BALTIMORE — Today WellDoc will announce results showing that type 2 diabetes patients who used the WellDoc DiabetesManager® in a demonstration project significantly reduced their need for hospital stays and emergency room (ER) visits. The demonstration program, titled DC HealthConnect, was part of the Chronic Care Initiative sponsored by the DC Department of Health (DOH) and was conducted by the George Washington University Medical Center under the supervision of Richard J. Katz, M.D. The patients using the WellDoc DiabetesManager for an average of 12 months reduced their ER visits and hospital stays by 58 percent compared to the 12 months prior to the program.

"We're excited about the potential to drive down the costs of ER visits and hospitalization stays, while improving patient health."

Dr. Katz is presenting his team's findings today, December 6, at 11:15 a.m., during the "Diabetes Management" session at the mHealth Summit. The WellDoc DiabetesManager is the first clinically tested and Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-cleared mobile health (mHealth) solution to provide automated, real-time behavioral patient coaching and clinical decision support.

The DC HealthConnect project followed 32 patients recruited by the Chartered Family Health Center in Washington, DC. This real-world demonstration project confirmed the positive impact that real-time, cell phone based diabetes management, powered by an Automated Expert Analytics System™, can have on a Medicaid population. In 2010,

Medicaid covered nearly 53 million people and accounted for about 16 percent of all health care spending. Patients in the program used their own cell phones and were offered a \$20 monthly discount for their phone plan.

Exit surveys indicated patients were highly satisfied with the WellDoc DiabetesManager. For instance:

- 100 percent of patients found instant coaching feedback helpful
- 100 percent agreed that the system increased their glucose testing
- Only six percent found it to be a bother to enter their diabetes information
- Only six percent were worried about data privacy

“This project demonstrated that a mobile health diabetes self-management program can benefit a high-risk Medicaid population using their own cell phones. Patients were better engaged in their chronic disease management with lower emergency room visits and reduced hospitalizations. We learned that an mHealth self-management system can be successful and should support all ‘links in the chain,’ including patients, providers, educators and nurses,” said Dr. Katz, director, Division of Cardiology professor of medicine at George Washington University Medical Center. “We’re excited about the potential to drive down the costs of ER visits and hospitalization stays, while improving patient health.”

Diabetes care costs the United States \$218 billion annually, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Specifically, in 2008, diabetes hospital fees alone cost Americans \$83 billion a year — representing 23 percent of total hospital spending and an average cost of \$10,937 per diabetic hospitalization, according to a report from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Report author Dr. H. Joanna Jiang told the Financial Times, “One of the key messages here is that some of the hospital admissions and costs could be prevented if the patient could take care of their own conditions: monitor their blood sugar level, their behavior or lifestyle — you know, watch their diet and exercise more.”

Furthermore, on November 24, 2011, the New England Journal of Medicine published data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) finding that 25 percent of all emergency room visits related to adverse drug events are due to mis-administration of diabetes medications. By 2013, the federal Partnership for Patients seeks to reduce unnecessary ER visits by 20 percent. “While the project was of modest size, the results are very compelling,” said Malinda Peeples, M.S., R.N., CDE, vice president clinical advocacy at WellDoc and past-president of the American Diabetes Educators Association. “We believe that this demonstrates that WellDoc has the potential to help the federal Administration achieve its goals and save billions of dollars by enabling people with type 2 diabetes to stay out of the hospital.”

The DC HealthConnect project follows on the heels of a landmark randomized controlled trial (RCT) that used the WellDoc system and was published in the September 2011 issue of Diabetes Care, the world’s preeminent diabetes focused scientific journal, published by the ADA. In this trial, patients using the DiabetesManager plus their usual care had an average decline in A1C of 1.9 percentage points compared to a 0.7-percentage-point decline seen among patients treated with usual care alone, regardless of starting baseline A1C.

“WellDoc’s DiabetesManager supports people with type 2 diabetes as they manage their medications, communicate with care providers and better control their outcomes,” said Suzanne Sysko Clough, M.D., founder and chief medical officer at WellDoc. “Now there is a growing body of evidence indicating that, in addition to lowering A1C, DiabetesManager can help patients self-manage their diabetes which may help keep them healthy and out of the hospital.”

At the mHealth Summit in Washington DC, in addition to Dr. Katz’s presentation of the demonstration results, Dr. Charlene Quinn, R.N., Ph.D., University of Maryland School of Medicine, will present the results of the RCT data that was published in September. Also, WellDoc will exhibit in booths #734/736, Dr. Anand Iyer, WellDoc president and chief operating officer will speak during the session, “Mapping Mobile Health Regulatory Experiences for Small and Large Companies,” and Chris Bergstrom, WellDoc chief strategy and commercial officer, will speak at the round-table, “The Future of mHealth Business Models in Diabetes.”

About DiabetesManager®

The WellDoc DiabetesManager is a software-based medical device cleared by the FDA and powered by a proprietary Automated Expert Analytics System™. Through real-time patient coaching, DiabetesManager redefines conventional diabetes management for people with type 2 diabetes. In addition, it provides clinical decision support to their healthcare providers and extends their care beyond traditional office visits. In September of 2011, the one year results of the first randomized controlled trial (RCT) of a mobile phone-based diabetes coaching and decision support intervention were published in Diabetes Care, the world's preeminent diabetes focused scientific journal, published by the American Diabetes Association. The trial met its primary endpoint of reducing blood glucose levels over one-year for patients using DiabetesManager plus their usual care vs. those patients treated with usual care alone (control group). Patients using the DiabetesManager had an average decline in A1C of 1.9 percentage points compared to a 0.7-percentage-point decline seen among patients not using the system. Results were similar regardless of baseline A1C. For more information, visit www.welldoc.com/Products-and-Services/Demonstrations.aspx.

About WellDoc

WellDoc®, a healthcare company that develops technology solutions aimed at engaging patients and enhancing health outcomes, is focused on simplifying the way chronic diseases are managed through a collaborative, life-changing approach that breaks down the barriers of engagement and adherence by providing patients and their healthcare providers with real-time, actionable information. WellDoc has developed an industry-leading, technology-based solution designed to help people with chronic diseases better manage their conditions. In 2011, Forbes editors selected WellDoc as one of "America's Most Promising Companies" based on its potential for future growth. For more information, visit www.welldoc.com.