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Mindfulness is the key to managing health care costs

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We're taught from an early age to be "mindful" in the choices we make in our daily lives. These choices include how we treat others and ourselves; in how we work and play, spend, and save. Mindfulness can be equated with personal accountability.

At an organizational level, most successful businesses operate from a mindful perspective. They make decisions based on best estimates of cost, risk, and reward, with accountability to their stakeholders, customers, and the public.

Mindfulness as good medical practice

Similarly, mindfulness is a governing principle in developing an accountable care organization (ACO). It can determine how the organization delivers quality, satisfaction, and value to patients and employer groups.

Successful ACOs, like Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, are mindfully committed to working with employer groups and their members – to offer evidence-based health care solutions focused on prevention and chronic disease management.

ACOs develop programs and services to help keep members healthy and to direct the flow of care toward appropriate intervention. They shift care away from needless or redundant treatments and testing. In this way, ACOs benefit the patient and employer by managing the resources needed for quality care.

Pricing prevention

If a hospital stay is not needed because doctors and patients work together to prevent the need for acute care, how much could that save employers? According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, the savings amount to \$97 billion each year in the United States.

Kelsey-Seybold Clinic focuses on prevention and the management of chronic conditions. This focus has a significant impact to reduce costs. It's also simply better patient care.

A cultural shift

When physicians can shift the focus of patient care from fee-for-service billing to clinical programs that benefit patients – such as disease management and other ACO-based programs – an intentional, mindful shift in program use happens.

ACOs provide patient-centered care by developing a culture that is collectively focused on quality, satisfaction, and value. For our company, that model of care underlies every medical decision and organizational strategy.

ACOs empower physicians to practice evidence-based medicine, resulting in a shift from reactive care to proactive care to help keep

patients healthier. The result of this alignment is more satisfied patients and reduced health care costs.

ACO plan details

The chart below shows the significant impact of ACO on use of emergency rooms and hospital care.

The solution for employers concerned about health care costs is to find a plan option that actively seeks to provide value within its care model. To employers, today's health care costs may seem difficult to control. By adding a value-based plan to benefit offerings, employers can strike a mindful balance between value, employee satisfaction, and care quality. Mindfulness has never had more relevance to our members than it does today.

Kelsey-Seybold teams up with four major insurance carriers (Aetna, Cigna, Humana, and UnitedHealthcare) to offer high quality, cost-effective Kelsey Plans for Houston-area businesses. To learn more, visit KelseyEmployerPlans.com or call 713-442-3456.

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