

BITS, BITES & BYTES

Leveraging Technology in Healthcare

The New Players in Digital Health

Augmetix: pairs doctors and nurses with remote scribes through Google Glass. Augmentix scribes see and hear through the device and are able to take notes for providers during the visit. Sutter Health and Dignity Health have invested in the company.

Zipnosis: algorithm is used by hospitals with telemedicine services such as eVisit; provides fast diagnosis on typical cases.

One Medical Group: a membership-based primary care practice, average 30-minute appointments compared to traditional offices that come closer to 10 minutes per patient. Since starting 10 years ago, the fast growing company has expanded to more than 50 locations across nine cities. One Medical has partnered with Lyft, pharmacies and hospitals to service end-to-end needs of its members.

Grand Rounds: uses software to match patients with doctors.

Human experience and redesigning care using technology to empower human experience has become a central theme in today's discussions in the health care arena.

Recent studies indicated that facetime with patients is down as doctors spend more time on administrative work than they do seeing patients face-to-face and the problem has gotten worse over the past few years. Based on the study by Sutter Health, doctors on average dedicate 49% of their time to in-person visits and 51-percent to "desktop medicine", which entails tasks like completing progress notes, taking phone calls and refilling subscriptions.

The advent of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) have revolutionized administrative efficiencies. However, the volume of data records and what info actually matters have also been identified as contributing to the burden and burnout of doctors. EMR tasks should be taken away from providers to be able to give them more time for their patients. However, this is not happening because of excessive documentation which is actually more for "defensive documentation" or for legal purposes (readers are actually lawyers).

Panelists from the Future of Healthcare Forum held in April 2018 in San Francisco emphasized that technology is taking away doctor-patient relationship which is one of the most important factor for patients. Patients want efficiencies in terms of waiting times and accessibility of doctors, but interoperability (EMR systems) is not relevant for them.

Blending primary care and technology has proven to be an evolving process and we see very interesting trends:

A new breed of remote scribes

Some doctors have enlisted more scribes and technology providers such as Augmetix, a San Francisco startup pairing providers with a remote medical scribe through Google Glass. Augmentix scribes see and hear through the device and are able to take notes for providers during the visit. It is working on a new feature in the Glass that will display notifications in the corner of providers' eyes, reminding them about any test results or any upcoming procedures.

Stanford Medicine Stanford partnered with Google data scientists and researchers to launch a nine-month pilot at the family medicine clinic.

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Nimble Pharmacy: deliver prescriptions to patients. Other similar companies include Alto and in the future Amazon, which is reportedly eyeing an entrance into the market.

PlushCare: help people get virtual access to doctors or urgent care issues; contracts with physicians coming from top 50 US medical schools to ensure quality who can work flexible hours from anywhere providing care in 18 states.

Talix: provides health care risk adjustment software and will focus on becoming integrated with more electronic health record companies in 2018.

Zephyr Health: sells software that helps life sciences make more informed decisions by connecting generally large, disparate sets of data. Its machine learning technology drives the company.

Medrio: Uses software that electronically collects clinical trial data; aims to help life sciences companies ring therapeutics to market faster.

Amino: a database powered by 9 billion healthcare claims to help people predict their medical costs and find high-quality providers.

Providers will record patient visits as data scientist and researchers use machine-learning algorithms to analyze the recordings. The goal is to create a digital scribe that will be able to automatically complete documentation for the electronic health record system.

Telemedicine grows up

While the technology has been around about 10 years, consumers have been slow to adopt virtual doctor appointments. Despite this, more doctors and startups are investing in telemedicine as patients look for care that's more convenient than a hospital visit. Telemedicine is also evolving beyond connecting doctors and patients through video. Services are now capable of providing a doctor's diagnosis within a few hours, complete with prescription and lab orders. Paired with pharmacy deliveries, it's possible to see a doctor and get medications without even visiting a hospital or pharmacy.

Apple enters the health care segment

It has updated its health app to support medical records integration from a handful of hospitals nationwide. The updated Health app, which comes installed in all iPhones, will allow consumers to view medical information from different hospitals and clinics in one view. Apple worked with electronics health record vendors Epic, Cerner, and AthenaHealth to create a standard for transferring records for the app. Once consumers select their provider and connect to get their data, they will receive notification as their data gets updated.

Blockchain to the rescue?

Blockchain could help pull together medical records, insurance claims, and appointment scheduling to solve interoperability problems that often make healthcare slow and inefficient.

Medical Concierge

One Medical and Forward Focus provide membership-based care sending patients home with monitoring devices and offering 24/7 access to doctors. Consumers are drawn by faster, convenient access without the hassle of scheduling appointments weeks in advance and traveling to clinics.

The power of data

Health data is allowing doctors to build better patient profiles and predictive models to more effectively anticipate, diagnose and treat disease. This has given rise to mobility healthcare and biological monitoring. Access to new, diverse data and open datasets are also fueling drug discovery and making clinical trials and research more efficient.

With the advent of AI and machine learning in the healthcare space, demand for training data to feed into AI and machine learning algorithms has been on the rise.

Marriage bells ring for healthcare

Financial pressures, changing health policies and competition push health care players to combine and leverage technology in order to survive. Here

are some of the notable partnerships:

1. Amazon.com, Inc., Berkshire Hathaway Inc., and JP Morgan Chase Co announced that they will form a health care company to cut costs on employee coverage and will work on technology solutions aimed at brining down costs.
2. Dignity Health and Catholic Health signed merger in December 2017.
3. Ascension in talks with Providence St. Joseph Health for a possible merger.
4. CVS plans to Acquire AETNA for \$69 billion to integrate their insurance and pharmacy benefits management.
5. Walmart and Humana, a health insurer with a market valuation of \$37 billion, are having early-stage talks about strengthening their existing partnership.

As AI and automation moves up the skill ladder, how does it impact our HIM Services Delivery?

Experts agree that nearly every industry will be touched in some way by automation, with prime candidates including finance, real estate and healthcare.

Whether that's primarily a danger or an opportunity remains open to much debate. A 2016 study by the Pew Research center found 65% of Americans expect that within 50 years robots will be doing much of the work now done by humans – but strikingly 80 percent believe it will happen to other people's job, not their own. They may be mistaken: More than half of current jobs in the San Francisco metro area will be automated by 2025, according to research from the University of Redlands [Source: SFBT]

It was observed by providers, researchers, and entrepreneurs that there will be demand for more patient and AI interactions, at least for basic assessments, but expect this to accelerate. As evidenced by the emerging digital startups and the technologies being employed, there are applications that affect white collar labor in specific verticals, but for now they're not so much replacing that kind of workforce but augmenting them.

The Philippines is the 2nd largest market for healthcare payer BPO service delivery as well as the preferred location for clinical healthcare business process services. The evolving trends present opportunities as well as risks which could be mitigated as we continue to strengthen our value propositions and keep attuned to the fast evolving demands and needs of the industry. The advent of AI definitely present opportunities on SaaS as well as in the development of training data.

Problems evolve but the core objective remain consistent, that is to provide the best patient experience through value-based healthcare models. This is at the core of the Philippine's value proposition. In every interaction with stakeholders from the healthcare industry, the quality of care of Filipino's has been acknowledged. Together with the continued development of services that is in keeping with the trends, the Philippines is poised to have a stronger foothold in the healthcare services sector.

Sources:

Various news articles from the San Francisco Business Times

Future of Healthcare Forum

Stanford News:

<https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2017/06/stanford-medicine-launches-health-care-trends-report.html>

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