



AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# **MultiCare Leaders Leverage Digital Care Journeys to Optimize the Patient Experience**

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*Healthcare Innovation recently sponsored a webinar with senior executives at MultiCare, the integrated health system based in Tacoma, Washington. Participating were Ben Chao, President, CareConnect at MultiCare and Paige McCall, VP, System Service Lines, MultiCare, and Joshua Liu, M.D., CEO & Co-Founder of SeamlessMD.*

The two MultiCare executives and Dr. Liu spoke of the advances being made at MultiCare with the support of SeamlessMD.

Dr. Liu began by noting that, “Over the past decade, hospitals and health systems have focused their digital and IT efforts on implementing and optimizing the EHR. But now, the recent rise of patients’ expectations, has focused efforts on digitizing more and more of the patient experience. And the pandemic has raised awareness among providers that we’re caring for digitally savvy healthcare consumers now. Many providers have gone digital for their brand awareness and patient acquisition strategies, including in terms of online advertising and social media; others have developed digital online scheduling and online appointment reminders; others have invested in mobile check-in and digital wayfinding. But one of the newest buckets is digital care journeys. We’re finding, with value-based care, that health systems need to engage and monitor patients outside the four walls of the institution, to guide them on their patient journeys. Digital care journeys are about engaging patients with personalized care plans through their smartphones, tablets or computers, to deliver specific reminders, monitor symptoms, and manage care, among other things,” he said.

Dr. Liu cited the following as elements of what organizations are doing, in full or in part, right now, and asked audience members to share what they were doing in these areas:

- Digital care journeys being deployed across multiple care pathways
- Leaders are actively piloting digital care journeys for one service line
- Organizations are researching and evaluating solutions
- Some are in the early stages of defining their patient engagement/experience strategy

**Surveyed in that moment, audience members provided the following results:**

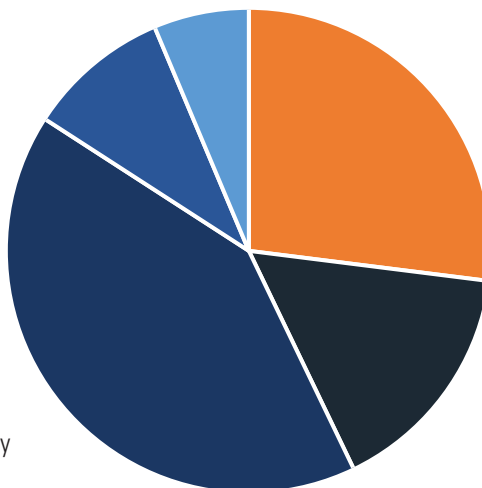
**24.29%** responded that they are deploying digital care journeys across multiple pathways

**14.29%** are actively piloting digital care journeys for one service line

**37.14%** are researching and evaluating solutions

**8.57%** are in the early stages of defining their patient engagement/experience strategy

Only **5.71%** had not yet begun on that journey



Dr. Liu said, “It sounds as though about 40 percent are deploying or at least piloting. That’s probably even better than I’d expected. It sounds as though nearly half of folks are doing something.”

Chao said, “On the flip side of the coin, over 50 percent of audience members are still exploring. So, are people exploring point solutions specific to one particular type of care journey, or multiples? There are a lot of different flavors out there on the market.”

## MultiCare’s Digital Health Strategy

McCall noted that MultiCare is a not-for-profit health system founded back in 1882 as a single hospital. More partnership and opportunities have come for MultiCare to grow, with a commitment to quality and innovation. “Adding value includes our commitment to our digital health strategy, and engaging patients with convenience, quality, and high-value opportunities to support their care and wellness.” Exponential growth meant that “We really felt a digital health strategy/engagement strategy was something we would need for consistent engagement” across the region.

McCall presented a slide with statistics on the MultiCare Health System, among them:

- 1,600 employed providers
- 11 hospitals
- \$3.8 billion in annual revenue
- The system operates behavioral, retail, pediatric, and cardiovascular health networks

Speaking of MultiCare’s digital strategy, Chao said that, “When we think about MultiCare’s vision of being the Pacific Northwest’s highest-value system of health, that peels down into three core strategies.

1. Performance excellence, per quality of care and the experiences of patients and providers, as well as financial performance.
2. The shift into population-based care.
3. Expanding care access.

All that ties into MultiCare’s digital strategy. When we think about evolving arrangements, we wanted to find solutions in support of that thesis. We also wanted to look at a different set of patient behaviors during the pandemic, and treating the patient as a consumer, as any other industry would. So we grade ourselves using net promoter scores, particularly around care and access “perceptions of consumers”. And the other piece is combining such elements as push notifications, with clinical content, education, and engagement, particularly when we’re entering into risk-based arrangements in such areas as total joint replacement and spinal fusion.”

Further, Chao said, “We started to realize that most companies are good at one thing, such as managing patients’ MyChart; or saying, we have the best clinical content and care plan specific to a particular condition. But we were looking for a partner that would do both of



those things exceptionally well, without putting too much of a burden on our providers. And we wanted to find a partner that ensured that we had an omnichannel, versatile enterprise solution that reduced our burden in terms of interfaces and integrations to build out. At the end of the day, we wouldn't have the capital to invest in best-of-breed solutions for every single service line. And we wanted to leverage this tool as a sort of forcing function, in order to standardize to high-reliability care; we're on a journey to be a high-reliability organization."

Chao presented a slide that showed MultiCare's digital strategy around healthcare consumerism, with the following goals:

- To be a high-value system of health by enhancing population health management amid evolving value-based arrangements, defining our clinical value priorities.
- Embrace new patient behaviors and expectations for digital solutions for convenient care access.
- Provide patients with the ability to self-manage their care with an intuitive engagement and education tool.
- Deploy a digital patient and remote monitoring platform that works across various care pathways: surgery, maternity care, oncology, chronic care, etc.
- Standardize care so that no matter where a patient goes, they get the same high reliability and MultiCare experience.

## Key Goals & Clinical Outcomes

Chao said that he and his colleagues wanted to achieve several key goals:

- Reduce staff time, including phone calls, and spend less time on tasks
- Reduce length of stay
- Reduce readmissions
- Reduce ER visits
- Comply with state-level bundled payment care initiatives

"At the end of the day, we wanted to enter into more value-based arrangements; and in Washington state, we have some requirements that mandate that health systems have some technology tools and educational components in place, as part of that end-to-end journey for the patient." He noted that he and his colleagues engaged in a robust, multifactorial RFP process, in order to select a technology platform to support those efforts; and that process involved medical group, population health, and information technology leadership.

In the end, Chao said, the MultiCare leaders chose SeamlessMD as their platform partner. In that, Liu noted, they were able to obtain through SeamlessMD the following:

- Digital care plans (e.g., surgery, oncology, maternity, chronic care)
- EHR-integrated within clinical workflows and patient experience
- Remote patient monitoring
- Dashboards and analytics
- HIPAA- and PHIPA-compliant



DECISION CRITERIA	WHY SEAMLESSMD?
Epic Integration	Available on Epic App Orchard, deep experience with Epic & MyChart integrations Multimodal patient notifications (MyChart, email, SMS)
Clinical evidence & proven ability to improve outcomes	30+ clinical studies & evaluations for reducing length of stay, readmissions, ED visits, costs, etc.
Robust clinical content	Out-of-the-box, evidence-based digital care plans that are customizable by clinical teams (review & approve) Meets guidelines for health literacy & accessibility
Experience with multiple specialties	Supports wide range of surgeries, oncology, maternity care, chronic care
Overall cost of technical ownership	Low due to high-touch service partnership, including dedicated Customer Success Managers, Patient Education Specialists, and other resources

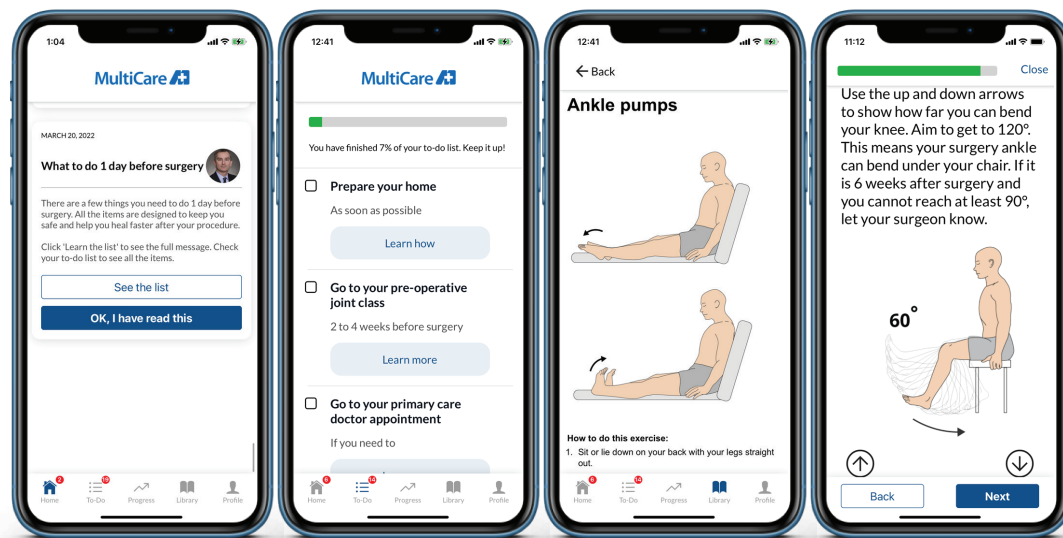
Dr. Liu shared slides showing the easily accessible patient education related to, for example, total knee replacement—in which the platform shares evidence-based patient education, and helps to monitor symptoms and patient progress. Providing clinicians with a level of customization so that they can receive as many or few alerts around patient condition as they wish, has been key to acceptance on clinicians' part.

## Easily Accessible Digital Care Journeys - E.g. Knee Replacement

Just-in-time reminders

Evidence-based care plans and education

Monitor symptoms, progress & PROs



The leaders at MultiCare focused first with SeamlessMD on the following:

- High patient volume
- Strong clinical champions and demand, including “roadshows” to raise awareness
- Alignment with quality and patient experience priorities

The results, McCall noted, have been excellent, with 90-percent patient activation between June 2021 and March 2022. “From the patients’ perspective, you can see that their feedback to us showed that they felt more confident and less worried, particularly around preoperative and post-operative patient concerns. Patients, she noted, felt more confident both before and after surgery.”

Clinical outcomes have improved around length of stay and readmissions, in areas such as hip and knee replacement. “We were able to see a marked improvement in length of stay,” shared McCall, and she also noted: “a 37-percent reduction in 30-day readmissions, since launching SeamlessMD.” In the end, McCall said, partnering with SeamlessMD has led to strong stakeholder engagement within the organization around all of those goals, and a sense of shared success in the initiative so far.

## Outcomes Analysis: Hip & Knee Replacement

FACTOR	CONTROL	SEAMLESSMD	DIFFERENCE
Sample Size	241	176	
Average LOS	1.50 days	1.12 days	↓ 0.38 days
30-Day Readmissions	9.1% (22/241)	5.6% (10/176)	↓ 37%
90-Day Readmissions	11.2% (27/241)	6.8% (12/176)	↓ 39%

SeamlessMD provides the leading Digital Care Journey platform for hospitals and health systems to engage, monitor and stay connected with patients across healthcare journeys. 30+ clinical studies & evaluations have shown SeamlessMD to improve the patient experience while reducing hospital length of stay, readmissions and ED visits. Health systems such as UAB, Intermountain, Atrium, University Hospitals, MultiCare, Baystate and others use SeamlessMD to elevate the patient experience, improve outcomes and lower costs. Patients access digital care plans on their smartphones, tablets or computers and are guided via reminders, education, and progress tracking. Providers receive alerts, monitor patients and access analytics to deliver better care. SeamlessMD is directly integrated with EHRs such as Epic, Cerner, Meditech, and Allscripts. SeamlessMD is recognized as a Top 5 Condition Specific Platform in the 2022 AVIA Connect Top 50 Remote Monitoring Companies Report. For more information and to see SeamlessMD in action, visit:

<http://www.seamless.md>