Care Coordination in the Post-ACA Environment

Delivering Value-based Care with a Modern Technology Platform

Who should read this white paper

This white paper is intended for business decision makers, including CxOs, VPs of marketing, purchasing, physicians, nursing, urgent care administrators, and others who are responsible for strategic initiatives involving enterprise technology.

What you'll learn

Gain an understanding of key post-ACA initiatives, what they mean for healthcare providers, and how adopting innovative technologies can improve care coordination and regulatory compliance, and drive business growth.

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Executive Summary

> "Due to historically large gross margins, this **lack of transparency** [about costs of procedures, inventory, equipment allocation, patient outcomes, and other key measures] **has been tolerated** for decades in the healthcare sector. Even if healthcare executives were to remain satisfied with the status quo, there is now pressure from outside for **a light to be shined** into healthcare organizations' operational and financial 'black boxes.'"
>
> **Pat Becker**, former CIO of University of Chicago Hospitals

The business of healthcare is unlike any other. Where most industries have revenue models that are based on knowing the cost of a given product or service, in healthcare the true cost of a service is largely unknown, especially if you are using multiple legacy applications. So many key variables are not captured and not considered in revenue calculations. Opportunities to realize cost savings are lost and decision-making suffers due to a lack of real-time information, inability to measure outcomes, and overall systemic inefficiency.

Lack of integration also means employees and managers have an incomplete view of the business metrics, trends, and key performance indicators (KPIs) derived from records, inventories, and processes. These insights are fundamental to finance, analytics, supply chain, facilities management, and most importantly, patient care. In such a fragmented and complex environment, care coordination is deeply impacted, making it difficult to map the patient journey—creating the potential for unintended consequences and poor outcomes.

Complicating the business of healthcare even further are continually evolving government and industry regulations, including mandates instituted by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA, in particular, requires new levels of accountability, transparency, and documentation, while adhering to HIPAA requirements. In order to thrive in this complex—and increasingly competitive—environment, healthcare organizations must replace business as usual with a strategic, technology-driven approach.

Forward-thinking healthcare organizations understand that integrating technology solutions—ERP, CRM, cloud computing, and a connected infrastructure—is foundational for future business success. With the right platform, healthcare organizations can replace inefficient workflows, disparate systems, and multiple vendors with an integrated, end-to-end solution that saves time, effort, and cost.

This white paper discusses ACA initiatives, and addresses how your organization can gain the agility necessary to deliver a higher level of care coordination. This new level of care can be achieved with MazikCare, a fully customizable and scalable, single-platform, plug-and-play solution. Powered by Microsoft Dynamics, MazikCare provides actionable insights from your enterprise data.

The ACA and New Mandates for Care Coordination

Why is care coordination so critical in the post-ACA era? Simply stated, when care is coordinated across the entire treatment journey, it is more likely that a patient will be treated holistically. With this broader perspective, the likelihood increases that patients will receive the right care at the right time, and patient treatment outcomes will be improved.

Supporting the shift to greater accountability, transparency, and coordination in service delivery and patient care, the ACA has multiple provisions that specifically address how patient services should be delivered and paid for. This shift requires that healthcare organizations place a stronger focus on preventive care, pay for performance, and patient-centered outcomes.

FOCUS ON CARE COORDINATION

Healthcare service delivery has never been more complex. In the post-ACA environment, healthcare organizations must have a strategic orientation that focuses on addressing three fundamental challenges:

CARE COORDINATION

PREVENTIVE CARE

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE

PATIENT-CENTERED OUTCOMES
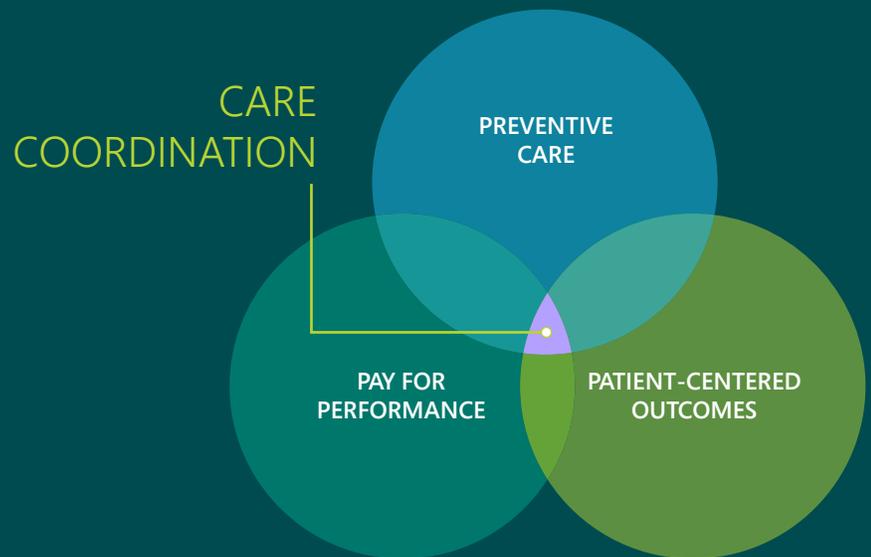
Preventive Care: A Major Coordination Challenge

Coordinated and comprehensive preventive care services have proven essential in achieving quality outcomes and reducing per-patient costs. The Affordable Care Act has introduced a number of reforms to support the expansion of preventive care services, including greater patient access to a wider spectrum of these services. Additionally, health plan providers are being urged to cover these expanded services, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is applying financial pressure on care providers to offer preventive care services at little or no cost to the patient.

A greater demand for preventive healthcare services means that information systems must be capable of processing an increasing volume of patient data, and securely sharing this information with all providers involved in the patient's care journey. From home healthcare providers to primary care physicians, urgent care providers, specialists, nurses, pharmacists, health insurance companies, and other pre-to post-treatment providers, all patient care services must be documented, made accessible, and coordinated so that the patient does not receive unnecessary or insufficient services.

TRENDS TO WATCH: VIRTUALIZATION OF HEALTHCARE

According to recent research, the percentage of virtual care, as compared to in-person care, will grow rapidly. Gartner believes that:

By 2018

40%

of primary care encounters in the U.S. will be delivered virtually

By 2020

25%

of all care in the U.S. will be delivered virtually

By 2020

15%

of care in Europe, as well as Australia and New Zealand, will be delivered virtually

Other countries will also rely on virtual care, but usage will vary greatly.[1]

Pay for Performance: Demonstrating Quality Outcomes as a Condition for Reimbursement

In addition to expanded preventive care standards, the ACA has also introduced pay-for-performance (P4P) criteria that require providers to shift to a value-based care model, instead of the traditional fee-for-service model. New rules also mandate that a patient cannot be billed for the same diagnosis or treatment twice, which is easier to monitor with a robust monitoring and tracking system.

In a P4P program, physicians will no longer be compensated based on the volume of services they provide; instead, the quality of the patient's outcome is the key metric determining compensation. For example, provider reimbursement could be tied to outcomes such as percentage of test results that fall within pre-defined target ranges, or post-care patient surveys that quantify physical and mental well-being. Other outcome-based practices being adopted are **physician performance report cards** and **payment bundling**, in which providers agree to accept one overall payment for a service as opposed to charging for the individual components. This is where tracking and optimizing the supply chain becomes critical as all costs associated with treating the patient must now add up to less than the bundled reimbursement in order for the facility and physician to remain profitable.

Care coordination, made possible by the systematic tracking of large troves of data, is essential for P4P success. In order for providers to demonstrate quality care, they need to have the ability to document the services rendered, the immediate outcomes, and any post-treatment progress or regression. Clinical pathways must be tracked for physicians to determine best practices and what might constitute the best clinical plan for a patient. Healthcare staff and administrators must support the implementation of these clinical plans by scheduling appointments that align with the care plan, notify the patient of their progress, and follow up with the patient post-treatment. Patients must be continuously monitored for adherence to the care plan, such as keeping track of prescriptions or exercise regimens. With all this considered, data tracking is now more essential than ever.

In order to improve quality of care and incentivize reductions in hospital readmissions, organizations like CMS are using reimbursement penalties for higher-than-expected hospital readmission rates. In a P4P environment, care coordination is intrinsically tied to delivering quality patient care—and obtaining maximum reimbursement for services.

A Work in Progress

Since the inception of the Affordable Care Act, healthcare organizations have experimented with P4P models. However, in order to successfully shift to a **value-based care model**, healthcare organizations must first determine what constitutes quality care, relying on extensive patient treatment and outcome data. Healthcare organizations must also analyze data using **comparative effectiveness studies** to determine best practices, and prescribe care plans accordingly. While we know the steps for achieving coordinated care, in order to determine the most accurate clinical pathway for a required treatment or service we need technology tools that can produce actionable insights.

> Care coordination is essentially **"project management for medicine"** according to Pat Becker, former CIO of University of Chicago Hospitals

Patient-Centered Outcomes: Leveraging Technology Tools for a Better Patient Experience

The emergence of a value-based, consumer-driven model is increasingly forcing healthcare organizations to focus on patient-centered outcomes. Today's patients are digitally connected and technologically savvy, and expectations for real-time access to health information is assumed. In contrast, healthcare organizations have lagged behind to offer these digitally connected users an environment that matches their expectations. Many, if not all, healthcare organizations are littered with cumbersome manual processes and paperwork throughout the patient care journey. To meet these changing needs, and comply with the ACA's third initiative in reaching patient-centered outcomes, patient relationship management via CRM is essential.

While there is agreement that the "single customer view" a CRM solution can provide is fundamental to patient-centered care, it is also true that enterprise CRM can be a challenge to implement and many organizations are lagging behind. According to Gartner,[2] after more than 20 years of investments, fewer than 20% of organizations have adopted enterprise CRM solutions.

HEALTHCARE ANALYTICS COMES OF AGE

A recent survey asked what top three organizational imperatives were driving investment in data and analytics. The survey revealed that, by a wide margin, the top three imperatives for HDOs are:

| Transitioning to a population health management and value-based care delivery model | Evaluating clinical effectiveness and outcomes | Improving performance, capacity, and throughput[3] |

The healthcare industry's transition to new payment models are increasingly linked to better patient outcomes. The pressure to address rising costs, eliminate waste, and improve organizational performance is clearly a catalyst for this new focus on data and analytics.

Patients = Customers in the Business of Healthcare

In healthcare, the "customer" is the patient, and CRM systems are especially valuable for capturing, and tracking, critical communications between a patient and his or her care team. While electronic medical record (EMR) systems have the ability to document care-related information, CRM systems used in conjunction with EMR systems offer patients a simple way to interact directly with their care team, also giving providers a more holistic view of the patient. A CRM system also allows physicians to manage their case load in a more proactive and effective manner. Today's physicians demand that patient-centric information is available for one or multiple patients simultaneously on any smart, handheld, or desktop device for better productivity.

In contrast, EMR systems are primarily intended for use by healthcare providers, and patient access to EMR health information is generally limited. EMR systems in use today lack the productivity and integration features that are required to support a patient's care plan. Cloud-based CRM systems are user friendly, and offer patients more complete access to their healthcare data. One major benefit of CRM is that patients can receive automated reminders that promote adherence to the patient's care plan. While the benefits of using both CRM and EMR systems for optimal patient care are indisputable, most healthcare organizations today are relying solely on EMR systems.

However, to ensure coordinated, patient-centric outcomes, healthcare organizations should consider implementing CRM systems that are compatible with their EMR systems. This approach builds patient loyalty, deepens relationships, and also drives process efficiency and business growth.

Strategic Transformation: Using Technology to Meet Your Care Coordination Goals

In a quality-first environment, healthcare organizations are being forced to improve supply chain management, revenue cycle management, and patient management. These are complex goals that require a modern technology platform that includes best-in-class enterprise resource planning (ERP), electronic medical record (EMR), and customer relationship management (CRM) solutions. By leveraging these tools, financial and operational data can produce truly actionable information and bottom-line results, and fulfill growing audit requirements.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO ACHIEVING CARE COORDINATION

Hospitals, long-term care facilities, urgent care centers, and multi-provider practices can thrive in the post-ACA environment by taking the data they already own and turning it into actionable information.

STEP ONE:
Coordinate Care at the Organizational Level

- Establish an IT infrastructure that integrates with existing ERP, EMR, and cloud-based CRM systems to facilitate information and data sharing.
- Implement an integrated system that includes a patient's entire care team.
- Provide up-to-date, real-time data so a unified care plan and any follow-up plans can be prescribed.
- Ensure that the infrastructure is scalable to meet increasing demands for expanding patient services and tracking patient outcome KPIs.

STEP TWO:
Coordinate Care at the Patient Level

- Harness the power of CRM online and Microsoft Azure Cloud to effectively manage patient interactions and coordinate care.
- Adopt a cloud-based CRM system that integrates seamlessly with your existing EMR and ERP systems, ensuring patient information is easily transferred across the care team in a safe and HIPAA-compliant manner.
- Improve patient access to data through easy-to-navigate patient portals provided by CRM.
- Communicate effectively with providers across the continuum of care both within and without the organization.

STEP THREE:
Improve Healthcare Reporting by Removing the Black Box

- Document all patient services including graphics, audio, and video capture.
- Establish a systematic way to proactively report patient outcomes.
- Employ modern ERP solutions that improve supply chain management and financial reporting.
- Adopt ERP solutions that can report key performance indicators including patient outcomes, readmission rates, patient satisfaction, and clinical trial data, among others.
- Leverage ERP data to achieve maximum reimbursement of services and prevent federal fines for non-compliance.

Real-World Results with MazikCare

MazikCare is a comprehensive, powerful, enterprise technology solution that manages the full spectrum of healthcare data and workflows, offering organizations a new holistic approach. The MazikCare scalable, hybrid cloud platform is designed to address the specific needs of both patients and providers, while offering tools that support a 360-degree view of medical records, patient schedules, medical supplies, finances, communication with internal and external entities, and more.

MazikCare is built on the Microsoft Dynamics platform and CRM, and leverages powerful analytic features via the Microsoft Azure Cloud. MazikCare is also designed to integrate seamlessly with your current systems to aggregate and organize data from all sources for better management of patient care, and fulfilling reporting requirements.

Adopting the Microsoft-based, MazikCare solution allows your organization to:
- **Eliminate** the need to coordinate with several vendors for managing independent systems for CRM, financial management, materials management, patient scheduling, EMRs, and more.
- **Streamline** appointment scheduling, medical billing, and patient management, all through one Microsoft system.
- **Increase** collaboration among all entities involved in a patient's care—from urgent care centers to large hospital chains—to establish a single, unified care plan.
- **Ensure** security of personal health information by implementing a multilingual, HIPAA-compliant system.
- **Increase** mobility by accessing key data from anywhere, at any time, through smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices.

An exceptional user experience is at the core of the MazikCare solution suite. Smooth implementation is ensured with SureStep, a proven Microsoft tool that allows new customers to train during the SureStep implementation process to ease the burden of knowledge-transfer.

Healthcare organizations are complex and must continually adapt to changing regulatory and industry requirements, so enterprise solutions must be agile. Mazik Global is the only solution provider with an all-inclusive, holistic approach to enterprise healthcare technology, and is regarded as a proven leader in enabling hospitals, long-term care facilities, and multi-provider practices to successfully meet the demands of a complex and changing industry in a hybrid cloud transformation.

The MazikCare Solution:
Powerful, Agile, and Simple

Clinical Services

CRM

PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

CALL CENTER & PROVIDER SYNCHRONIZATION

MATERIALS & SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

ANALYTICS

Back Office

A Closer Look: Case Studies

Pinnacle Hospital & Urgent Care Facility: A Proactive Leader in Care Coordination

Organization: Pinnacle Hospital & Urgent Care Facility, a network of acute care hospitals operating out of northern Indiana and Illinois.

Challenge: As a growing organization whose goal is to provide coordinated, quality care to the thousands of patients it serves each year, Pinnacle needed to find ways to:

- Transition from a volume-based to a value-based reimbursement system.
- Increase integration among its clinics.
- Improve data aggregation and analysis processes to enable quick decision-making.

In its search for vendors to provide customized solutions, Pinnacle was ready to settle on the prospect of having to coordinate with multiple vendors to satisfy all their unique requirements.

> "At Pinnacle, the choice was clear: We could either piecemeal various systems and hope that they would all work together, or we could deploy the full suite of Microsoft and Mazik solutions and know that they would. We are confident in MazikCare for the life of our hospital."
>
> **Haroon Ansari**, CEO, Pinnacle Hospital & Urgent Care Facility

Solution: Pinnacle's care coordination problems were answered through MazikCare, an all-in-one solution including ERP, CRM, and cloud technologies. Today, Pinnacle experiences maximum connectivity enabled by integration with a full suite of technologies for improved materials management, patient relationship management, as well as business analytics and intelligence. Pinnacle benefits from the ability to coordinate with a single vendor to manage its diverse business activities, and its processes have been streamlined through enhanced user involvement and intuitive mobile applications. Utilizing the cloud and other innovative software solutions, Pinnacle can rest assured that these technologies, built upon a rigorous set of security controls, meet HIPAA criteria.

Results: Pinnacle is achieving new milestones in operational efficiency and care coordination since adopting the MazikCare platform. Within 24 months of implementation, Pinnacle is on target to reduce hospital operating costs by 10% to 15%. Significantly, Pinnacle's insurance claim processing time has been reduced to 3 to 8 days—instead of the typical 28 to 34. Pinnacle has introduced integrated patient and materials management using Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online, Microsoft Power BI, and Azure Machine Learning as the foundation for the MazikCare application. With MazikCare, Pinnacle staff are making the best possible decisions at the point of care with real-time, data-backed insights.

A Closer Look: Case Studies

Medisys: Agility Brings New Opportunity

Organization: Medisys, Canada's leading national provider of preventive health solutions.

Challenge: Medisys was looking to make strategic improvements to care coordination in its executive and occupational health lines of business. The clinical experience is the key differentiator for Medisys, which sought similar improvements by enhancing the patient experience, increasing integration among its clinics across Canada, improving revenue cycle management, and streamlining its processes. After consulting several vendors over two years to develop solutions around these varied goals, Medisys began pursuing its own customized solution.

Solution: MazikCare delivered the high level of care coordination that Medisys was looking for in a single, integrated solution. Since the pilot at its first clinic, Medisys has adopted new care coordination applications that connect to Microsoft Surface and iPad devices for efficiency and mobility. The patient experience has been taken to the next level through streamlined operations and enhanced protocol management. This fulfilled a core business requirement of Medisys, whose business often caters to busy executives that particularly appreciate a reduced wait time.

> "We wanted a platform that evolved. With MazikCare, there was no need to reinvent the wheel."
>
> **Michel Bouchard**, Senior IT Director, Medisys

Results: Medisys has been able to improve revenue cycle management to enhance business growth. By harnessing the power of ERP, Medisys can track and report KPIs, allowing for greater transparency of the organization's performance, coordinated care at the patient level, and improved healthcare reporting. As part of a continuing collaboration, Medisys will be making additional improvements at the organizational level. Building onto their existing platform, Medisys physicians will soon be able to log patient information including health history, medications, allergies, and other relevant information now accessible to all within the patient's care team, supporting greater organizational connectivity. MazikCare has addressed Medisys's needs for today, while offering them flexibility to meet the requirements of tomorrow.

Conclusion

The Affordable Care Act was intended to introduce reforms that help alleviate healthcare costs by establishing preventive care programs and by eliminating the provision of redundant patient services. Achieving the level of care coordination that ACA demands is a challenge and, in order to be cost-effective, requires integration at both the organizational and patient levels, as well as full disclosure of operational and financial outcomes.

Given the sheer scale of such a project, care coordination is not something that can be achieved overnight, but with the correct tools in place this goal is attainable. As healthcare organizations are facing increased pressure to incorporate new systems and processes that enable real-time data sharing and expansion of patient-centered and preventive care, innovative solutions are key to its success.

When care coordination programs are effective, patient satisfaction, key performance indicators, and the bottom line all improve.
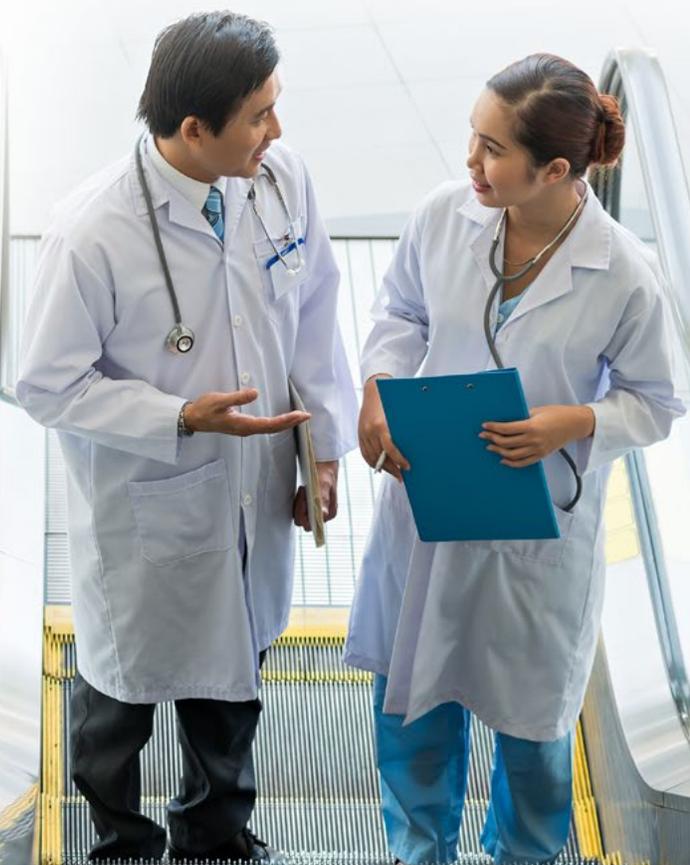
About Mazik Global

Mazik Global is a visionary, experienced, and time-proven global IT solution development and implementation company. With more than 320 consultants serving 70+ key strategic customers worldwide, we are recognized for our customer-centric approach, combined with years of cross-industry and technology expertise. As a Microsoft Gold Partner and key development partner of Microsoft Dynamics, healthcare, and cloud products, Mazik Global offers unique and unmatched industry experience in ERP, cloud, mobile, and enterprise social networking solutions.

To find out how your healthcare organization can improve patient care and improve employee and patient satisfaction through efficient care coordination, call us today at **(847) 768-9353**.

You may also be eligible for a free, four-hour assessment session with our healthcare experts to help you get started. We will discuss changes in healthcare industry initiatives while paving a path to move toward the connected, patient-centric virtual technology that everyone has been talking about.

At Mazik, we take pride in our technology and want to arm you with the tools to succeed in this post-ACA word. Don't get left behind. Contact us today to evaluate your processes and discuss strategies to better streamline your operations.

Email **Taylor.Graff@mazikglobal.com** to take advantage of this valuable offer.

[1] Extending the Reach of Healthcare Delivery with Virtual Care – 08 October 2015, Analyst: Thomas J. Handler, M.D.

[2] Gartner, The Eight Building Blocks of CRM: Overview, Ed Thompson, 2015.

[3] State of U.S. Healthcare Provider Analytics, 2016, 16 May 2016, Analyst: Laura Craft.