



SUCCESS STORY

iHealth Exchange sets the pace for greater collaboration and clinical integration for Houston area physicians

tibbr social enterprise platform provides a healthy physician collaboration model for iHealth Exchange, a Houston based healthcare information exchange provider

Overview

Healthcare reform in the United States concentrates on better managed patient care through the secure use and sharing of health information over the internet. Healthcare Information Exchanges (HIE) are a central part of healthcare transformation as they work towards increasing connectivity and enabling patient-centric information flow to improve the quality and efficiency of care. HIE organizations seek to eliminate paper-driven processes and increase collaboration during all phases of the continuum of care for a patient. By linking together physicians, specialists, imaging facilities, diagnostic test centers, hospitals and other healthcare facilities HIE's improve care transition to positively affect patient health outcomes. A key focus of linking these groups together is to provide a secure communications environment that can host a wide range of patient care coordination services. Services include electronic access to medical record systems, scheduling, referrals, insurance pre-authorizations services as well as patient safety reporting systems and medical marketing programs.

The greater Houston area is home to iHealth Exchange, a health information exchange company with the mission of improving communications, collaboration and reducing operational costs to ultimately impact the speed and efficacy of medical care provided by more than 12K physicians in their network. To solve the long-standing challenges of sharing information in healthcare, iHealth Exchange sought an enterprise social platform to provide precisely targeted communications to support the crucial objective of securely getting the right patient information to the right person at the right time.



Headquarters

Houston, Texas

Size

12,000 physician members

Industry

Healthcare

Challenge

- Create a collaborative care environment enabling physicians and healthcare workers to securely send the right patient information to the right person at the right time
- Share information throughout the continuum of care for a patient by linking together imaging facilities, diagnostic test centers, hospitals and other healthcare facilities
- Offer HIE members patient care coordination services including electronic medical record systems, scheduling, referrals, insurance pre-authorizations, patient safety reporting systems and medical marketing programs
- Streamline the physician referral processes and remove the need for paper, post and fax transmission

Coordinated care starts with collaboration

To ensure success among physician members, iHealth wanted to base their information exchange strategy on familiar and natural ways physicians already shared information. Since most computer savvy physicians are familiar with social media and using “share, like and follow” buttons to share information and receive updates, the team focused on enterprise social platforms offering a similar paradigm of communicating information. When iHealth evaluated the tibbr collaboration environment, they instantly recognized how easily and securely healthcare workers and physicians could use the system the exchange patient centered health information. The highly usable and familiar interface would require little training and offered more controlled and manageable analogy of Facebook they were looking for. It was easy for the team to envision how new automated workflows in the tibbr platform would go long way towards replacing in-efficient paper-based processes and enable better collaboration within a healthcare information exchange framework.

“One of the biggest challenges I have seen in the healthcare industry is the exchange of information between providers. Using tibbr, we have been able to replace the obsolete paper and fax machine workflow with an electronic system that lets providers communicate in real time,” explains Chris Stephens, CEO iHealth Exchange. “Patients today expect better care and service from their doctors’ offices and hospitals, and enterprise social tools give providers a better platform to deliver modern care.” Chris Stephens, CEO iHealth Exchange.

Tibbr enterprise social delivers a healthy dose of savings

As a newly formed HIE organization, iHealth Exchange began to focus on transforming core revenue generating functions within the Houston physician community. Starting with physician referral management, iHealth wanted to eliminate the need for paper, post and fax transmission in physician offices and beyond. Industry research shows that the typical primary care physician refers patients to an

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average 229 specialists working in 117 separate practices every year¹. In addition, Stephens estimates that doctors still fax most of their referrals, requiring dedicated staff that can cost the average practice nearly \$50,000 per year².

By electronically managing the referral process between providers, iHealth has been able to streamline the referral process and improve how specialists connect while taking into account the healthcare industry’s stringent exchange laws and regulations. Now physician practices and hospitals in the iHealth Exchange network can rededicate referral staff by relying on the private and secure tibbr platform to electronically manage the referral process.

Using tibbr as a collaborative foundation, iHealth Exchange has been able to create an electronic workflow that follows a patient from point to point. It monitors and manages the all-around patient experience with a Facebook-like “wall” for sharing information like ordering requests, patient referrals, and internal communications and EHR data providing real-time, constant access to the latest events. It manages the delivery and receipt of messages, plus the policies surrounding the authentication of the recipient and their right to receive the specific type of information contained in the message.

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“Making changes in the tibbr platform is a fairly easy and straightforward process as the management component is automated,” said Stephens. “It is easy to see how this type of system could be applied in other HIE environments where the regulatory environment may be slightly different.”

With the tibbr social enterprise platform deployed, iHealth Exchange is learning about the range of communications required between patients, doctors and hospitals. Focusing on frequent communication patterns, iHealth Exchange has plans to automate some of these communications within the tibbr platform to help drive further efficiencies and productivity within their member base.

Benefits

- An interoperable HIPAA compliant social network enabling HIE member physicians to collaborate and share patient information, including: lab and testing requests, patient referrals, internal communications and EHR data
- Automated referral program and improved efficiencies to enable iHealth members to rededicate referral staff to other areas
- Integrated access to a wide range of patient care coordination services to improve how physicians connect with patients and each other
- 360° view of the patient experience with electronic workflows that follows a patient from point to point to provide a secure patient-centric place to view and share information

¹ 17 February 2009 Annals of Internal Medicine Volume 150 • Number 4

² 19 January 29, 2013 TIBCO Software Inc Press Release Healthcare Technology Company iHealth Exchange Selects tibbr to modernize patient care

About tibbr With users in more than 100 countries, tibbr is the social enterprise platform that is revolutionizing the way we work, collaborate, learn and share. tibbr connects people, applications and data in context in an entirely personal way. tibbr brings together what matters – to individuals or groups – to get work done better, faster. It’s an open, intensely flexible platform that can be delivered on premise or in the cloud. Learn more at www.tibbr.com.

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