

Customer Success Story

CareFirst Community Health Plan

Using healow Insights to Bridge Gaps and Create Value

The Challenge

In today's healthcare, both providers and payers work with dozens of other organizations, whose information-processing systems vary in type, format, and efficiency. To move from fee-for-service to value-based care and payment models, payers and providers alike need powerful new tools to bridge the gaps between them — to work smarter and not harder.

The Solution

healow Insights is a cloud-based service that automates the sharing of clinical records and supplemental data between providers and payers. CareFirst Community Health Plan District of Columbia (CHPDC) used healow Insights to simplify and speed chart-pull requests, with all data secured with industry-leading encryption protocols.

The Results

By using healow Insights, CareFirst was able to achieve an improvement in their Star ratings on three key measures for well-child counseling. The time and money they saved allowed them to better allocate existing resources to increase the amount of data they can use for reporting.

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Facing the Chart-Pull Challenge

Healthcare providers and payers alike are responsible for thousands of patients annually. They may approach their work from different perspectives, yet both can benefit from more efficient ways to share patient data, improving the accuracy and timeliness of medical care, and developing solutions for value-based care.

CareFirst Community Health Plan District of Columbia is a growing medical organization with tens of thousands of members in and around the nation's capital.



Karyn Wills, M.D.,
Chief Medical Officer

"Before healow Insights, we had a dedicated staff that would go out to all of the providers' offices and pull records," said Dr. Karyn Wills, CareFirst's Chief Medical Officer. "Each staff member would look at maybe 100 records a day, and that took a lot of time."



Normally, it would take one employee between two and three weeks to manually pull 1,500 patient charts remotely — or even longer if they had to go on-site at various practices. Using healow Insights, CareFirst was able to obtain more than 1,500 patient records within 48 hours, with no need to be on-site at any practices

*Belinda Zhang, PhD, MHA, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield
Community Health Plan District of Columbia
Chief Quality Officer*

Once staff had gathered medical records from providers, they would manually enter the data into their HEDIS® data collection solution. HEDIS, or Health Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a widely used set of quality measures to assess the effectiveness of managed care efforts.

Standardization and Outcomes

An already laborious and time-consuming process became all the more challenging with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited on-site visits and the use of faxes. CareFirst turned to healow Insights to meet three goals:

- Improve the efficiency and productivity of the “chart chase” process
- Reduce the time and resources spent on medical record reviews (data abstraction)
- Increase the organization’s Star ratings in three key areas of well-child counseling

“My team and affiliates contract with all our hospitals, community-based providers, FQHCs, ancillary providers, etc.,” said Kenny Greene, Vice President for Provider Services at Trusted Health Plan, which was acquired by CareFirst in January 2020.

“It’s always been my objective to make sure that the health plan doesn’t have an adversarial

relationship with our provider network, but a partnership. We have used eClinicalWorks and healow with our top providers, those who have large primary care panels, and the amount of data that we are able to gather has pushed us past the mark where we needed to be to accomplish our HEDIS goals.”

Improving Quality

“Normally, it would take one employee between two and three weeks to manually pull 1,500 patient charts remotely — or even longer if they had to go on-site at various practices. Using healow Insights, CareFirst was able to obtain more than 1,500 patient records within 48 hours, with no need to be on-site at any practices,” said Belinda Zhang, Chief Quality Officer.

Most importantly, between 2019 and 2020, CareFirst was able to improve the percentage of records they extracted for each of three key measures pertaining to well-child counseling.

They captured 17.4% more records for body mass index measurements, 34.3% more records for their nutrition analysis, and 30.1% more records for measuring overall physical activity.

As a result, they improved all three of their Star ratings on those measures. The National Committee for Quality Assurance rates practices on a scale from 0 to 5 stars on numerous measures under HEDIS.

**HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).*

“We will continue these initiatives by pushing the HEDIS quality needle via healow and eClinicalWorks to as many of our providers as we can,” Greene said. “We are constantly having this dialogue with our provider partners. If we can streamline the process of getting quality data

utilizing healow and its platforms, the providers are more willing to partner with us and share their data. The more initiatives and creative ways that we can do this in partnership with our providers makes it a win-win. It’s a win for the plan, for the provider, and a win for the member.”

healow Insights’ Impact on Measures

Well-Child Counseling Measures	Percentage of Records Captured 2019	Percentage of Records Captured 2020	Percentage Gain, 2019-2020	2019 NCQA Stars	2020 NCQA Stars
Body Mass Index	63.83	74.94	+17.4%	1	3
Nutrition	43.85	58.88	+34.3%	1	2
Physical Activity	44.68	58.15	+30.1%	1	2