

OUTSIDE **THE** LINES

LEADERS CHANGING HEALTHCARE: MOLINA NEW MEXICO + PROPELLER HEALTH

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Asthma – and other chronic disease – have long been understood to account for the lion’s share ([more than 85%](#)) of our nation’s healthcare burden and costs. Also, in most cases, prevalence of these chronic diseases (including for asthma) is increasing. The question is: How are leaders changing healthcare in this category?

In this *Outside the Lines*, we feature a partnership between Molina Healthcare of New Mexico and [Propeller Health](#). Molina is a Medicare and Medicaid-focused health plan and provider. In New Mexico, Molina serves approximately 250,000 members. Propeller is a digital health company (based in Madison, Wisconsin) featuring “smart” inhalers to deliver transformative care for people with asthma and other respiratory diseases. [In May 2016](#), Molina and Propeller started a pilot project focused on improving



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medication adherence, reducing symptoms and improving control for Molina's members with persistent asthma. With this, the [Propeller Health](#) FDA-approved platform – including Propeller's inhalers – will be provided as a tool for patients to better understand and manage their disease. Also, the platform will allow physicians, other care providers and family caregivers to track and monitor how patients are taking their medications, receive an alert when a scheduled dosage is missed, and better understand how certain places or times trigger patients' asthma symptoms.

According to Propeller Health's [CEO](#): “We're helping people improve self-management, but with less effort. We're bringing respiratory care into the digital era, making it easier for people to do a better job of tracking their illness. The sensor helps patients remember to take their controller medication, or alert caregivers if they need more help.” In addition to partnering with Molina Healthcare of New Mexico, Propeller Health has partnered with other health plans, health systems and cities/counties including Dignity Health in California, Sharp HealthCare in San Diego, the Arizona Care Network, Amerigroup Florida, Children's Medical Center of Dallas, UTHealth in Texas, the City of Louisville in Kentucky and others.

There are a lot of "ifs" and "what ifs" in healthcare, especially now with the changes being proposed to the Affordable Care Act. But what's not a "what if" is this: more than ever, we must be leaders

continuing to change healthcare. We look forward to following the Molina + Propeller partnership and hope to be able to report back on the impact they are making as they pursue this together.

Always looking ahead,



Kim Athmann King, MBA, FACHE

DO YOU KNOW...

One in 12 people in America, nearly 25 million people, have asthma. According to the [CDC](#), this represents 7.8% of the total population – 8.4% of children (age <18) and 7.6% of adults – and the numbers have been increasing for years. For example, the [Asthma and Allergy Foundation](#) of America reports that from 2001 to 2011, prevalence of asthma grew by 28%, increasing the total cost of asthma from \$53 billion to more than \$56 billion annually. Most of these costs, about \$50 billion, were direct costs mostly paid to hospitals. The CDC indicates millions of visits per year with asthma as the primary diagnosis including: 1.6 million emergency department visits, 10.5 million physician office visits and 1.3 million outpatient department visits.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT...

Propeller Health isn't the only asthma-focused medical device, digital platform and innovator for respiratory diseases. Many makers of inhalers, drug makers and others are in a race to develop a new generation of smart sensors and other digital tools. Those involved believe that reducing serious attacks by improving adherence could [save](#) \$19 billion a year in U.S. healthcare costs.

Another company interesting to watch is [AsthmaMD](#). Launched in 2010 and designed by UCSF pediatricians, pulmonologists and allergists, AsthmaMD pairs its custom-designed and branded Peak Flow Meter with a free AsthmaMD smartphone app. The goals are to help patients better manage their asthma, provide an integrated data platform for doctors to manage asthma care, and build an extensive database for researchers and scientists. According to AsthmaMD, “[Over 55%](#) of asthmatics are unaware their asthma is not well controlled, which has shown to have direct correlation to increased risk of hospitalizations, urgent medical needs and reduced quality of life.” The company says that AsthmaMD has helped 50,000 asthma sufferers better track and control their asthma.

DO YOU HAVE A STRATEGY AND SOLUTION FOR THIS?

Every health system we know is currently pursuing population health as a key strategy. The question is how are you advancing this? Also, are you making progress, one population group, one chronic condition, one step at a time? According to [HFMA's Healthcare 2020 reports](#), published in Fall 2016, transformative innovation is a vital pathway for success. This report notes: “Over the next three to five years, innovations in care delivery and healthcare business processes have the potential to reshape the competitive landscape in the industry ... Within clinical care, these innovations create the opportunity to deliver care that:

- Is more targeted (such as cancer therapies tailored to an individual patient's tumor),
- Is timely (such as remote monitoring of individuals with chronic conditions),
- Takes place in a more cost-effective setting (such as virtual visits or 'hospital at home'), and
- Engages consumers before they become patients to help them manage their health (such as mobile apps that support nutrition for pregnant women).”

There are hundreds of examples of transformative innovation taking shape in healthcare, including many designed for chronic conditions. We have been studying and profiling these since 2015. Executive summaries and other tools focusing on new ideas and disruptive innovations in healthcare are featured in our ZIGZAG Healthcare ideas and innovation library. Click [here](#) to join us as we continue to stay in front of, and on top of, these trends.



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