Let's talk value-based care…

Organizations throughout the country are faced with value-based care delivery obligations, but few of these organizations can claim that they've achieved expertise with the model. Among those still navigating their value-based care journey, the path feels long and filled with challenges. Ramona Ramadas, BSN, a Clinical Transformation Consultant for Siemens Healthineers, recently helped Siemens Population Health Management kick-off our webinar series with the session "Navigating the Value-Based Landscape", now available to view [here](). In our continued conversation with Ramona, we discuss this topic in more detail, focusing on specific challenges faced by organizations working to mature their value-based care strategy.

In the webinar, you outlined a number of competencies that organizations must master in order to be successful with value-based care delivery. Recognizing that it can be difficult for organizations to get started with value-based care, is there a competency that should be prioritized?

Siemens Population Health Management recommends that organizations begin working toward proficiency in all of the competencies: Understanding Your Patient Population, Workforce Development, Supportive Technology, and Internal Buy-In and Organizational Readiness. However, we understand there are reasons why it may be necessary to prioritize a competency. In these scenarios, Internal Buy-In and Organizational Readiness should be prioritized. This competency is foundational for any organization participating in value-based care delivery, and mastery of Internal Buy-In and Organizational Readiness implies that the organization has established a top-down culture that understands both the importance of value-based care, but also each individual's role in achieving better outcomes for patients.

It's supremely important that to get started, organizations should establish leadership roles that are tasked with success related to value-based care delivery. These roles may be required to meet certain

quality objectives, or they may be charged with designing the population health strategy for the organization. In many cases the leadership role tasked with leading value-based care delivery has oversight or responsibility for meeting financial performance metrics in parallel with realizing better patient outcomes.

Once leadership roles have been identified, the organization should bring together a team of resources to represent primary, specialty, operational, and ancillary care. Additionally, patient representatives and network and community representation will help to ensure that the focus of the organization's efforts is around the patient's needs.

There are many different value-based care programs and contracts that organizations may be required to participate in. How might an organization take a phased approach to this work, versus taking on all programs at once?

A phased approach can be a good strategy for slowly developing value-based care proficiency. As proficiency is gained, additional programs and contracts can be started. To begin this process, the organization should inventory the programs and contracts that are required, the financial implications of each (i.e., what will the penalty be for non-participation or below target participation), and the organization's readiness. Once this information is understood, the organization can develop a roadmap for working with its programs and contracts, adding risk over time.

Workforce is one of the competencies discussed in the webinar, and many organizations do not know how to use the value-based care workforce that they have effectively, while others are unable to dedicate resources to do value-based care work. How do you coach teams to address these scenarios?

Having a team of resources to do the work, and not knowing how to best utilize them is every bit as challenging for an organization as lacking resources. Mature value-based care organizations recognize that all patients need support, and that varying levels of care should be provided by the workforce. To plan this approach, the organization should begin working to understand the patient population and their needs, another of our value-based care competencies. Once the population's needs are understood, resources can be deployed to provide care.

For organizations unable to dedicate resources to care management tasks, or organizations whose resources are asked to fit value-based care work in between core responsibilities, finding additional support may be achieved by leveraging technology, our final competency. Although many of the population's needs should be addressed through direct contact, technology can be used to extend the care team by identifying gaps in care and engaging patients to close these gaps through calls, emails, or text messages. Applying technology in this way will allow resources with limited time to focus on patients with the most complex needs. Technology can also be used to streamline or automate tasks that are often managed manually. Examples include automating patient stratification or running quality performance reports to support performance improvement teams.

With so much uncertainty around the future of healthcare policy, it seems plausible that organizations will adopt a "wait and see" approach to population health and value-based care. Is this a strategy that Siemens Healthineers supports, or should organizations continue to work toward value-based care transformation?

Regardless of the uncertainty surrounding healthcare policy at this time, it is important for organizations to continue to move from getting started, to high performance in the competencies presented in the webinar. Value-based care programs such as the MACRA Quality Payment Program or Bundled Payment Initiatives are already in progress, with more programs in development. Without continuous, focused effort toward improving value-based care competencies, organizations will struggle to perform against the increasingly complex requirements of existing programs, and will struggle to manage the volume of additional programs that will be developed and required in the future.

Ramona has led transformational consulting engagements for a wide range of organizational models and sizes throughout the country. For additional information on our services, or to engage the Siemens Healthineers Value-based Consulting team, please email Ramona.ramadas@siemens-healthineers.com.

First in the "Together we can help transform the value of care" web series - "Navigating the Value-Based Landscape", available now - view [here.](#)