

# INSIDE EDGE

## Consumers and Healthcare Emerging Models

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We have seen the future and its name is consumer. When we began this issue of Inside Edge it was to be an update on consumerism and PHRs. When we wrote the last word it had become an update on healthcare itself. We found that consumerism is no longer just a concept, but is quickly becoming the strategic framework of the future for health systems, both acute and ambulatory, and companies, both software and services. This trend is consistent with the development of HIEs, which we covered in the previous Inside Edge and which link the community of which the consumer is the center. PHRs are important factors in this evolution but not the story itself.

We have more than a solid panel of sources for this story, a diverse group that includes Seattle-based Group Health Cooperative, Boston-based Center for Connected Health at Partners HealthCare, Palo Alto, Calif.-based Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Orange, Calif.-based St. Joseph Health System and Kansas City-based Cerner Corp. Consumers are on the move and they're bringing data.

### Group Health Cooperative

The first thing you have to understand about Group Health Cooperative (GHC) is that it is one of the few healthcare organizations in the country run by consumers. Seattle-based GHC, which provides medi-

cal coverage and care to nearly 630,000 residents of 20 counties in Washington and two in northern Idaho, operates under the aegis of an 11-member board of trustees who are all health-plan members elected by other health-plan members. That consumer focus shapes everything GHC does, including how it deploys the EHR and what others call the PHR.

"We believe in the shared health record," says Gwendolyn O'Keefe, MD, GHC's associate medical director for quality and informatics. "So, it's not the same as a standalone PHR. It's their, consumers', view into the EHR." Indeed, GHC patients have had a personalized view into their medical records since 2003, even before the EHR was rolled out to providers, an unmistakable stamp of a consumer—not hospital or provider—driven culture.

About 206,000 members, or 60 percent of patients cared for by GHC's group practice, are registered with MyGroupHealth, a portal provided by GHC's EHR vendor EPIC but significantly customized by GHC. "It's really important for members to know what their providers actually say their medical problems are," she says.

All members have access to basic information in their EHR such as a prescription list, but those who are "chart-based," or cared for by GHC providers, have more data available, including laboratory results and problem lists. Those members

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also have the ability to exchange secure email communication with their physicians.

“We’re an integrated payer/provider system,” acknowledges O’Keefe, which enables the organization to pay for email consults as a way to better engage members in managing their own health, which results in better and more efficient care. “Our patients love it. Our surveys have found that active users of MyGroupHealth are more likely to renew their coverage each year,” she says.



**Gwendolyn O’Keefe, MD, Associate Medical Director, Group Health Cooperative**

through. Those who complete registration get their password mailed to them. An alternative increasingly favored by GHC is to help patients register at clinics. “It’s a big push for us,” says O’Keefe about proactively signing up members on MyGroupHealth, “because it really supports the way we provide care. The Group Health Research Institute has found that web-based monitoring of patients with chronic diseases results in them gaining better control over their blood pressure. It was nothing fancy, patients simply reporting by secure email.” Also, patients can do direct scheduling which greatly reduces telephone calls to clinics.

### Unrealized fears

In addition to overcoming member reluctance, GHC has had to overcome physi-

cians’ fears that patient emails would overwhelm them. “None of those fears have been realized,” she notes. “Patients use email rationally and it makes it easier for doctors to answer their questions.”

On first pass, clinic staff can also filter out a lot of patient emails because they are typically associated with administrative tasks like prescription-drug-refill requests or appointment scheduling. “When in doubt it goes to the doc. It’s not meant to be used for emergency, but we have a turnaround time of 24 hours,” says O’Keefe. Also, staff follow symptom-based, standardized protocols for conditions like urinary tract infections in advising patients.

Users of MyGroupHealth range across all ages, even including a number of 100-year-olds. Medicare recipients with multiple chronic diseases comprise one of the biggest user groups. “Parents of kids love it,” says O’Keefe, noting that state laws vary but “proxy access” is allowed to parents up to age 13 in Washington. “What teens seem to want is text messaging, which we’re working on. We’re also working on proxy access for the elderly,” she says.

One thing is clear: many of the predictions as to what consumer demographic would or would not use an online health records were wrong. Even economically challenged people have found access to MyGroupHealth at Internet cafes and libraries, notes O’Keefe.

### Center for Connected Health

“The two are not linked,” asserts Joe Kvedar, MD, in reference to consumerism and PHRs. As director of the Center for Connected Health at Partners HealthCare in Boston, Kvedar likes to deconstruct the conventional healthcare nomenclature as a way to clarify what’s really happening.

## CONGRATULATIONS



**Banner Health**



**Peter Fine, CEO, Banner Health, was awarded the 2010**

**CEO IT Achievement Award by Modern Healthcare and HIMSS.**



**GroupHealth**

A key is making registration an easy two-step process like online banking, although after the first step there’s typically a drop-off of people who follow

“Everyone uses different words. Some say ‘consumer,’ some ‘patients.’ I was at a government conference and they used the term ‘citizens.’ How individuals use technology to become participants as opposed to passive recipients of healthcare is really what we’re talking about,” he says. “The technologies are multiple. It’s definitely a trend, it’s interesting and it has to happen.”




**Joe Kvedar, MD,**  
Director, Center for  
Connected Health

The trend is occurring in many different ways. In some cases the repository is a PHR but not always. While Google Health and Microsoft HealthVault offer varying designs on repositories of personal

health information, they are already cast as “traditional” compared to consumer applications like Nike+ social health network and Patients Like Me, a Boston-based firm whose mission is to connect people with the same diseases, especially currently incurable ones like ALS and MS. The business model is such that when patients agree to join they give up their right to privacy of their medical information.

“That’s been very powerful. They do user-designed clinical trials. I don’t know if that’s a PHR. You don’t need password protection and there are reams and reams of data. It’s very disruptive,” says Kvedar.

### Give me a reason

Partners approach is more conventional. “The Partners Patient Gateway is as traditional as traditional gets,” says

Kvedar, and like most PHRs has achieved only 5 percent to 7 percent uptake by consumers. Why is the uptake so low? Kvedar speculates it’s rooted in two factors. “One, we haven’t given them a compelling reason. We’ve treated patients so long as passive agents that they don’t get that they can be proactive. ‘That’s my doc’s job,’ they say. And they don’t believe it’s enough to say that if they travel to Tennessee they might get sick and need their personal medical record.”

A second reason for low PHR adoption is that most PHRs are colonial in nature—they extend the hospital, provider or health plan’s tentacles of control to the consumer. “We’re still by and large viewing ourselves as owners of the record. Why would you as a consumer bother? It’s not about PHRs,” he says, but what kinds of innovative solutions enable consumers to engage in their own health management. “Who’s doing that?”

Kvedar says the answer is found in the many ways consumers are beginning to track themselves in just about any aspect of their lives imaginable using small, portable computing devices and sharing the data via social media. The result is “the cloud” of personal data access and analysis on a global scale as described in articles like “The Data-Driven Life” by Gary Wolf in the April 26, 2010, issue of The New York Times Magazine and “The Nike Experiment: How the Shoe Giant Unleashed the Power of Personal Metrics” by Mark McClusky in the June 22, 2009, issue of Wired Magazine, part of its “Living by Numbers” series.

This “quantified self” is especially evident in the Nike+ system in which more than 2.5 million runners download data from an electronic shoe sensor that tracks speed and distance and which allows them

*Emergence of the ‘quantified self’ is evident in the Nike+ system, MedHelp and CureTogether, all self-tracking websites.*

## SI TELECONFERENCES

June 10

*IT Service Management  
Delivered Meaningfully—  
Part 5: Tools, Tools and More  
Tools*

- Mike Wilson, senior director, Clinical Systems, Compuware

June 14

*SI-Cerner Users Collaborative  
No. 24: Optimizing Clinical  
Performance through  
Business Intelligence*

- Scott Baumann, director, Enterprise Decision Support, Spectrum Health

June 15

*Cleveland Clinic Leverages  
Business Intelligence to  
Accelerate Performance  
Improvement*

- Tom Wadsworth, managing director, IntellisEPM, Cleveland Clinic

June 16

*Application Management  
Services: What, Why, and  
Who-For?*

- Tim Smith, principal, Deloitte Consulting, LLP
- Chris Davis, director, Healthcare Technology Practice, Deloitte Consulting, LLP

June 17

*Are We There Yet? Getting  
to Meaningful CPOE Use*

- Jason Hess, general manager, Clinical Research, KLAS

*continued on next page*

to compete globally with other runners over the Internet. But it's also reflected in websites like MedHelp, an Internet health forum where users launch 30,000 new tracking projects each month, and CureTogether, another self-tracking health website. McClusky says the cell phone is at the center of a "personal laboratory" revolution that will enable research and analysis previously only possible inside the lab.

### Measure, feedback, coach

While the Center for Connected Health's approach is a bit more conventional, Kvedar notes that the lessons of personal tracking are directly applicable. "If you measure accurate information about someone and give them feedback and coaching you can improve their diabetes, hypertension and CHF by lowering their blood pressure, lowering hemoglobin A1c and significantly reducing hospital readmissions," he says.

When Kvedar started at the center in 1995 its focus was telehealth whose value troika was seen as access, quality and efficiency. Partners viewed access as the opportunity and built a global business around its 4,000 specialists providing second opinions via telehealth's remote presence. But as telehealth peaked for Partners and the health system's in-person business grew the opportunity shifted from access to efficiency—and connected health became the guiding concept.

"Quality is necessary, but not sufficient. No one will pay for it," he says. "And chronic disease has mushroomed to the extent that we've lost the battle. There will never be enough doctors and nurses." Enter the one-to-many model of connected health. In the case of CHF, for example, three Partners nurses watch dashboards on 250 patients on any given day. Software feeds

them exceptions and they reach out to those patients requiring special help via a telephone call.

Having a single nurse monitor 100 CHF patients beats the standard home-care model in which a caregiver driving around is limited to only five or six patients in a day. And the perennial argument against such logical solutions—nice idea, but whose going to pay for it?—is holding less and less water. "Under any scenario it's highly likely payment will change from fee-for-service to paying for results," says Kvedar.

### Palo Alto Medical Foundation

With more than half its patients using an online PHR, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) is a bit of an anomaly compared to the rest of the nation. But that's also true if you look at PAMF's clinical quality scores, which consistently rank at the top in areas like cancer screening, asthma management, diabetes care and childhood immunizations. So PAMF may be instructive in incorporating PHRs into a clinical IT strategy.

A 900-physician multispecialty group practice based in Palo Alto, Calif., that serves more than 600,000 patients in four counties south of San Francisco, PAMF is also an affiliate of Sacramento, Calif.-based Sutter Health. But it's Paul Tang, MD, VP and chief medical information officer at PAMF, who is the group's face because of his leadership in clinical informatics at the national level, including vice chair of the federal HIT Policy Committee and chair of the Meaningful Use Workgroup. He's also a big proponent of a shared patient electronic record.

"Patients vote with their feet [in adopting PHRs]. PAMF has 55 percent of our patients online with us, and each year

about 70 percent of them say they have avoided one or more visits by using PAMF Online. That's pretty compelling," says Tang. "We've been at it a long time and have a 94-percent patient satisfaction rate. But, it's a two-way street. It has to work for physicians as well. And our physicians embrace the technology because it is good for care and efficient with their time."



**Paul Tang, MD, VP  
and CMIO, Palo Alto  
Medical Foundation**

Using MyChart from Epic as their shared record, patients of PAMF physicians can perform a variety of online functions, including view immunizations and test results, schedule and review appointments, view

problem-based education materials, request refills and securely exchange messaging with their healthcare team.

### 'Diabetics are mobile'

The medical foundation is on the last leg of a randomized clinical trial of online disease management of Type 2 diabetes funded by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The trial is examining several components of disease management, including wireless uploading by patients of glucometer readings through a cell phone using Bluetooth technology. "Cell phones are available anywhere and diabetics are mobile," says Tang.

The glucometer readings are transmitted via cell phone to the PAMF database through MyChart, which the foundation calls PAMFOnline. In return patients receive on their computer graphical repre-

sentations of that data and how their glucose readings vary with diet, exercise and the medications they're taking. Patients can also enter their goals into the system in consultation with a nurse care manager. "The feedback helps them visualize the correlation between their glucose and their carbohydrate intake, for example. That becomes a powerful motivator and educator," he says.

Patients also can access electronic summary sheets that outline risk factors for certain diabetes complications like heart attack, stroke, blindness and kidney failure. "Blood sugar doesn't mean much to a patient. Far more effective is displaying the risk of diabetes complications, and how diet and exercise affect those risks. We try to translate the health risks and health complications in a way they can relate to. When they understand those factors they say, 'Oh, that's why you're interested in my blood sugar,'" says Tang.

"By allowing patients to upload home glucose readings, we are able to pick up problems earlier, such as hypoglycemia. When we detect that condition, we can push out bite-sized 'video nuggets' telling patients what they can do to diagnose, treat, and prevent it. That's a teachable moment," he says.

### Teachable moments

Tang is sanguine about the transformation in care enabled by portable wireless devices like cell phones. "Physician office visits typically occur at very random times. They're merely a function of when they're available. The teachable moment is when the patient has a question related to his or her health or a new symptom. This initiative is consumer-centric because we're empowering the consumer, literally putting the tools into their hands. That's the power of the PHR. It brings us much

*continued*

#### June 21

*Implementing a Perioperative and Anesthesiology IS in Six Months or Less*

- Shermeen Vakharia, MD, HS/Clinical Professor, director, Thoracic Vascular, and compliance and quality improvement officer, University of California, Irvine

#### June 22

*Penn Medicine Data Warehouse: Now for the Really Hard Part*

- Brian P. Wells, FHIMSS, chief technology officer, Information Services, Penn Medicine (formerly The University of Pennsylvania Health System)

#### June 24

*Quality Measurement 101*

- Lou Diamond, MD, vice president and medical director, Healthcare, Thomson Reuters

#### June 29

*Quality Reporting: The Hidden Requirements of Meaningful Use*

- Erica Drazen, managing director, Emerging Practices, CSC
- Jane Metzger, principal researcher, Patient Safety, CSC

#### July 14

*Digital Health Community: Enabling the Coordination of Care*

- Carol Chouinard, director, Deloitte Consulting, LLP
- Mitchell Morris, MD, principal, Deloitte Consulting, LLP

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*The critical success factors for consumers to adopt PHRs, says Tang, is that the PHRs be automatically integrated with the shared medical record and connected with all members of the healthcare team. “Today’s commercial PHR doesn’t do that,” he says.*

closer to the goal of continuous access to healthcare, whether it’s through videos or access to our healthcare team, including dietitians, clinical pharmacists and primary care physician.”

The AHRQ study involves 400 diabetics, half of whom fall into the intervention group and half into the control group who receive usual care. “Usual care at PAMF is very good already,” says Tang. “It’s 40 percent better than the national average.” The randomized trial is important because it will, one, determine if the approach really works and, two, if it works, the results would help convince payers that it’s a more cost-effective approach and they should begin reimbursing for it. The study will be completed at the end of this year and the results published in first quarter 2011.

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### **St. Joseph Health System**

An Orange, Calif.-based integrated health system with 14 hospitals serving California, west Texas, and eastern New Mexico, St. Joseph Health System is a \$4 billion organization with 24,000 employees. It is also on a journey of innovation with consumers prompted in part by meaningful use requirements for patient engagement.

It’s a testament to the times that what might last year have looked quite innovative is becoming an IT staple among leading health systems and provider organizations. With some similarities to

PAMF, St. Joseph has rolled out a PHR for its foundation model physician groups in California in which it provides Allscripts ambulatory electronic health record integrated with the patient portal from Cary, N.C.-based MedFusion Inc.



**Larry Stofko, Senior VP & CIO, St. Joseph Health System**



**ST. JOSEPH**  
HEALTH SYSTEM

“We have thousands of patients registered,” says Larry Stofko, senior VP and CIO, who are able to perform tasks like submit prescription-renewal requests, make appointments and exchange secure messaging with results. The portal also includes a Personal Health Record, an Ask a Question feature and an Online Consultation that requires a credit-card payment of \$15 which is comparable to a co-pay amount depending on the patient plan. Following an online consultation it’s possible for the patient to pick up a prescription—electronically written by the physician—at his or her pharmacy of record. Turnaround time for the consult is typically within 24 hours.

“There was the typical uncertainty of physicians that they might be overwhelmed by emails, but that just hasn’t happened,” says Stofko. Also, the direct patient payment virtually eliminates any problems with reimbursement. “You bypass the traditional payment process. It’s closer to a fee-for-service model and is roughly equivalent to a 15-minute routine visit,” he says. The interaction is built around secure messaging to prevent clinical information from being broadcast over the wire. Email replies to patients state, “You have a secure communication. Click Sign On using password.”

## Size matters

Stofko says the large size of St. Joseph's participating physician foundations—225 in California and 160 in Texas—create economies of scale for the consumer initiative. “Where it's most successful is where we have integrated medical groups. You do have to have enough size. With that comes IT support,” he says. Another key is integration with workflow, which means that messages from patients need to be routed to appropriate people in the physician office: scheduling requests go to the scheduler; medication-renewal requests go to the nurse or physician assistant—or might show up as a physician “Task” like the online consult.

“A big patient satisfier,” notes Stofko, is that once the consumer enters all basic demographic information on the electronic clipboard they never have to do it again—online or at a doctor's office—because it automatically repopulates the clipboard with that information. It's a simple but iconic reminder of how IT can eliminate a traditional source of frustration for patients while improving process efficiency.

On May 10, Medfusion, the patient-to-provider communications software firm behind St. Joseph's branded patient portal, was acquired for \$91 million by Mountain View, Calif.-based Intuit Inc., the maker of business and financial-management software. The move, says Stofko, “underscores the consumerism trend in healthcare. Patients are already doing bank transactions, airline reservations and well-regarded education online. This acquisition signals that consumers want to go to that next level to manage their health better and, if you're the family caregiver, usually a female, you're starting to manage family members' health online

as well. This is how my wife interacts with our kids' pediatrician.”

## eBabyBook and more

And that's just the garden variety innovation. For its hospitals St. Joseph is also developing technology for meeting the requirement for “patient engagement” expected under the final meaningful-use guidelines. The health system is combining the large-scale data-repository capabilities of Microsoft Amalga with Microsoft HealthVault, the platform for consumer health information. The idea is to create an interoperable platform for personal health information exchange with drugstore chains like CVS and retail clinics like MinuteClinic, both of which have HealthVault connectivity.

“If you have a PHR that's HealthVault compliant you can start to pass health information back and forth,” he says. Once patients are registered on the St. Joseph patient portal they'll be able to receive their discharge reports and clinical summaries. The health system expects that solution will enable it to fulfill the meaningful use requirements of providing both summaries to patients who request them at least 80 percent of the time.

St. Joseph is also developing an eBabyBook to which parents of newborns will be invited to post photos and other social media communications at the same time hospital clinicians will be able to pass on health information like immunizations to the pediatrician after discharge. A nurse navigator will be able to use a Microsoft surface computer to drag and drop data files such as radiology images, lab results or transcribed reports to the laptop storing the eBabyBook and which sits on the tabletop computer. A working prototype of their similar nurse navigator system was showcased at this year's HIMSS show.

*Once patients are registered on the St. Joseph patient portal they'll be able to receive their discharge reports and clinical summaries. The health system expects that solution will enable it to fulfill the meaningful use requirements of providing both summaries to patients who request them at least 80 percent of the time.*

*The “shoebox personal health record” is insufficient because it relies too much on self-entry of data. “Our experience suggests that without proper motivation and feedback very few consumers continue using an independent PHR after initially entering some medications and allergies,” says Pederson.*

## Cerner

For nearly eight years Kansas City-based Cerner Corp. has had a PHR offering called IQHealth with the goal of giving provider organizations a better opportunity to communicate with patients by “tethering” the person to a health system. It gives patients the ability to perform self services like scheduling radiology exams or clinic appointments for themselves or family members. It also allows patients to engage in secure messaging and to view components of their EMR.

Patients using IQHealth can also participate in health management by logging in accomplishments against goals. For example, a patient in a juvenile diabetes health program can set up a health record tethered to a primary care physician who monitors his diabetes through test results and exams.



**Gary Pederson, VP  
& General Manager,  
Healthe, Cerner**

“IQHealth is still a robust product and is providing our clients a platform to achieve Meaningful Use,” says Gary Pederson, VP and general manager of Cerner’s Healthe unit, “but as we

look to the future, we’re convinced there’s another market-growth segment in the community for the un-tethered PHR.”

Cerner plans to launch its new offering called Cerner Health this fall, basing it on five general assumptions:

1. As healthcare costs continue to play a dominant role in our daily lives, people

will increasingly have financial incentives to become engaged in their own healthcare;

2. Healthcare delivery is local and personal, centered around local pharmacies, primary care providers and hospitals;
3. The “shoebox personal health record” is insufficient because it relies too much on self-entry of data. “Our experience suggests that without proper motivation and feedback very few consumers continue using an independent PHR after initially entering some medications and allergies,” says Pederson;
4. The patient or consumer exists at the center of a web of relationships with multiple caregivers including doctor, hospital, dentists, homecare workers and advocates as well as multiple devices, medications and media. The individual also plays many roles including patient and consumer, and is a member of multiple groups like the family, health plan, condition group, clinical trial, sports team and so on;
5. Most health-related activity is self-driven, so if you give consumers incentives, feedback and data, they will become more engaged in improving their health. “We think there’s stickiness in that approach,” he says.

Pederson provides an example: “Your PCP might suggest you have a chest x-ray and you engage your PHR and click on an Expedia-like link to get the latest rate for a chest exam. If we can give folks a financial incentive for PHRs we think that’s a huge motivator.” Current thinking is to offer the PHR as a free service to consumers almost like a Facebook account.

Cerner expects to attract its first customers from its legacy group of Cerner clients,

which number more than 8,000 acute care and ambulatory facilities and which represent a patient census of more than 100 million.

Another potential source of Cerner Health users will likely come from the employer market. Six months ago, Cerner launched a unit within the company that provides a package of on-site primary care, pharmacy and occupational-health services to self-insured Fortune 1000 companies with 2,000 employees or more. After an acquisition in January, Cerner's client base in this undertaking already numbers 25 employers, including Campbell Soup, Liz Claiborne, Toyota and KIA Motors.

Cerner is confident it can succeed at the model because it is experienced at providing "condition management" and wellness programs to its own 8,000 employees and has had success integrating myriad for-

eign devices into its clinical systems. Also, says Pederson, "an intended consequence is that our traditional clients are creating networks at a community level, acute care, physician offices, retail pharmacy, reference labs. Our admittedly aggressive goal is to have 100 million people in five years."

### Conclusion

Whether it's called consumerism, consumer-driven or consumer-directed health-care, it's clear that the framework of the newly emerging health system places the individual, as Cerner's Pederson says, at the center of a network of relationships that at different times are personal, clinical, professional and technical. It's new age in its holistic nature, space age in its use of technology and old school in its demand for self accountability. Welcome to the 21st century. It's only 10 years old.



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