



# Western Physicians' Alliance



## NEWSLETTER

August 2013

### PATIENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Consumers treat between 80 - 90% of their illness symptoms at home, and the most important determinants of health are personal health behavior and environmental factors. So medical interventions during patient encounters can be viewed as the tip of a very large iceberg.

Registries are useful for keeping tabs on the changing health status of individuals. But both types of applications have a built-in time lag. In the future, new applications and devices will be used to automate health monitoring for large populations on a near-real-time basis.

Today, home remote patient monitoring (RPM) devices are most frequently used to record the vital signs of very sick patients, such as people with congestive heart failure (CHF). Patients with chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes may also monitor their own conditions at home. With the advent of mobile technology and advanced wireless communications that connect portable monitoring devices to smart phones, it is now possible for people with chronic diseases to measure their health status anywhere and transmit data to care managers.

But a recent study at the Geisinger Health Plan showed that the use of RPM reduced

hospitalizations of patients with CHF, and Geisinger has expanded its program to include patients with diabetes and hypertension. As the evidence of efficacy grows, and as applications to detect patterns in data improve, RPM will become a key component of population health management.

Meanwhile, many other tools to engage patients in their own healthcare are already available. These range from automated health coaching and education to mobile health (mHealth) apps that encourage wellness and fitness. Some of the latter include aspects of online gaming and social networking. Telehealth systems that allow patients to consult with providers at a distance are also starting to spread, and not just in rural areas. Telehealth may be a key building block of PHM in the future.

Many providers can already exchange information through local web portals. Often attached to EHRs. Some portals also include personal health records that contain a subset of the data in the provider's EHR.

For more information on the WPA portal or the pilot registries contact, Trey Ligon at [trey@wpareno.com](mailto:trey@wpareno.com) or call 775-827-5775

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Current Resident or

## Saint Mary's Health Plans Health Management Classes



### Working together to keep you healthy

Free for all SMHP members • \$120 for non-members

#### Jump Start a Healthy Life with Diabetes

This six-week wellness program is designed to empower you to manage your diabetes more effectively and to live a healthy life. You will receive an individual risk assessment, which includes information about the numbers you need to look for in your lab results. Weekly presentations from diabetes experts provide an interactive, intimate learning environment that will help you control your diabetes.

#### Weigh To Go!

Eating well and maintaining a healthy weight is an ongoing challenge. This six-week weight-management program, taught by a registered dietitian, can help you achieve a healthy weight, grasp a better understanding of nutrition, develop mindfulness and gain confidence for long-term success. The program includes a body composition assessment and a fitness plan designed to be challenging but enjoyable.

#### Family Matters

Busy lives, school activities and work demands play a role in a family's health. We offer this six-week program featuring practical tips for incorporating healthy eating and physical activity into multi-tasking lifestyles. Learn the basics of cooking and shopping, establishing family rules, packing nutritious lunches and more—while involving the family in the process. Children are welcome.

#### Tobacco Free Forever

Choose to quit tobacco for good by participating in the Tobacco Free Forever (TFF) six-week program. Our Mayo-Clinic-certified tobacco treatment specialist will help you understand nicotine addiction, recognize your tobacco triggers, create an individualized quit plan and identify a support system. The program includes behavior modification and stress management techniques, as well as tools to make healthier food choices, increase physical activity and establish a relapse prevention plan.

*All programs require a health risk assessment (HRA). To complete the HRA, visit:*

*[saintmaryshealthplans.com](http://saintmaryshealthplans.com) > Health Plan Members > Member Wellness Services > Live Healthy Live Well*

Call to schedule your class  
775.770.7100



Saint Mary's  
Health Plans

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