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Introducing New Technology
at the Point of Care:

Five Tips for Ensuring a
Seamless Deployment

Greater connectivity and the proliferation of lower-priced sensors is creating disruption across industries and fueling discussions about "smart environments." This is evident in healthcare as the pace of change has accelerated to a point where each month brings new developments. This rapid innovation is imperative for organizations that want better care experiences and outcomes.

There is extreme pressure on healthcare organizations to be at the forefront of this change. However, when not approached properly, the introduction of new technology at the point of care can adversely affect the healthcare experience. This is why it is important that as caregivers and healthcare organizations integrate new technology, thought must be given to how that technology might impact the patient-caregiver experience.

Technology must provide real value to the clinical space and enhance, not detract from, the patient-caregiver experience.

Rather than being technology adverse when it comes to the point of care, caregivers and healthcare organizations need to actively seek out technology that ensures the humanistic aspects involved in care delivery are maintained while also improving operational workflow and enhancing quality of care.

Technology needs to provide real value and must be tailored to the intricacies of the clinical environment. It must augment the way patients and care teams interact and contribute to truly meaningful clinical insights for each encounter. Technology at the point of care should not be the focus of the experience but rather the conduit through which meaningful interactions occur and quality care is delivered.

New technologies and software, along with greater connectivity and data analytics, are consistently demonstrating new capabilities for positively affecting many facets of healthcare today. While previous health information technology has introduced new challenges to the exam room experience, it is also technology that is poised to dramatically impact the point of care with enhanced provider-patient interactions and significantly improved clinical outcomes.

Greater Connectivity at the Point of Care

One aspect where the point of care is poised to make gains with new technology is with greater connectivity. Much of the demand for this greater connectivity is coming from the consumerization of healthcare. Patients are demanding to be connected with their healthcare in the same way they are connected within other aspects of their lives.

Examples of this are fitness tracking devices or apps that help patients manage their diabetes or connect directly with caregivers. However, as with any new technology or trend, there is a lot of attention and unrealistic expectation surrounding greater connectivity at the point of care. It is not the perfect fix for every challenge and inefficiency in healthcare.

Given the industry and media focus on connectivity and Internet of Things (IoT), there is a real possibility that many healthcare organizations and caregivers will fall victim to the hype. We see this already happening throughout the healthcare industry. There is a lot of confusion, frustration and false starts as pilot projects do not deliver on exaggerated claims. Often there exist unrealistic expectations that require more resources, time and dollars than initially suggested.

While there is a lot of discussion surrounding greater connectivity and the digitization of the point of care ecosystem, it does offer tangible benefits. When done correctly, digital technologies including connectivity can change how care is delivered.

Within ambulatory care, there is a great need for connected technology and devices; when combined with digitization, it will likely transform the delivery of care. It will make it easier to monitor and analyze existing data or gather previously untapped data. It will enhance and strengthen the patient-caregiver interaction. And most importantly, it will enable the point of care to extend beyond the clinic or exam room to enable patients and caregivers to better manage chronic conditions.

Ideally, as the point of care ecosystem becomes more connected, it will become easier to uncover and gather more data about the clinical environment and what is occurring at the point of care.


In ambulatory care, digitization will likely be the catalyst for transforming the delivery of care. When evaluating technology, it is important to determine if the technology makes gathering, monitoring and analyzing existing or untapped data easier.

A Roadmap for Technology Integration

In order for healthcare organizations to realize these benefits, technology integration at the point of care needs to be guided by a roadmap and guardrails. Here are five considerations vital to help ensure a truly seamless deployment of new technology at the point of care that does not negatively impact the experience.

1. **Compatibility –** This consideration gets to the very heart of technology integration. Challenges in the early stages of implementation often occur when the technology is not a good fit for the environment or application. In order to make an informed decision, first evaluate technologies within the context of the current clinical environment and how it performs, as well as any business objectives and growth strategies. **How does it impact the provider-patient experience? Is it flexible enough for projected growth? What value does it offer to the quality of care provided?**

2. **Exam Room Workflow –** When it comes to point of care workflows, there are two ways to look at the technology in question. First, determine how the technology would fit into existing workflows. **What adjustments would need to be made? Would any workflows be improved or need to be eliminated? Would the technology require the creation of new workflows?** Second, determine if the technology would help enhance existing workflows. For instance, real-time locating system (RTLS) technology provides insight into how a clinical environment is performing. RTLS makes capturing accurate workflow data possible, including communicating in-the-moment patient and staff locations, wait times and staff interactions, as well as providing a vast amount of retrospective detail.
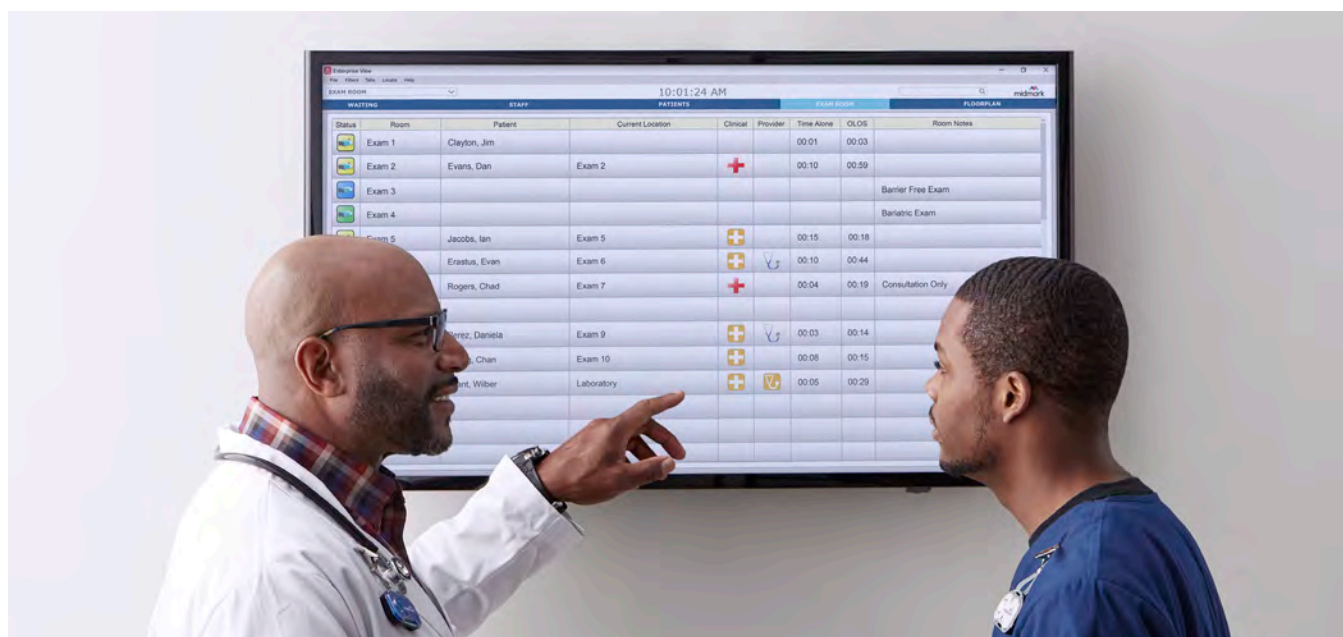
RTLS technology provides insight into how the overall clinical environment is performing by capturing and analyzing staff locations, wait times and equipment data to ensure workflow optimization.

Automated vital signs acquisition allows data to be sent directly to the EMR, helping to reduce transcription errors and inefficiencies.

3. **Connectivity –** Technological advances are bringing us closer to a fully connected digital ecosystem where point of care processes, equipment and caregivers are integrated. When looking at new technology, determine the level of connectivity it offers and how it will connect within the digital ecosystem being created. **Is it able to connect to existing systems and equipment? Are there any additional technology or software requirements?** For instance, technology that introduces a new level of connectivity to vital signs acquisition would require workflow changes but could minimize human variations and inefficiencies by normalizing and automating the process.

4. **Delivery and Setup –** Coordinating equipment and technology deliveries to outpatient facilities is often complicated by the absence of receiving personnel, unloading and staging areas, and tools. Without proper installation or integration, promised performance levels and benefits may fall short of expectations. Facility operations or provider-patient interaction could be disrupted. Ask equipment and technology vendors if they offer delivery setup and/or integration teams that can seamlessly connect the equipment or technology into unique clinical environments.

5. **Staff Engagement –** No one likes change. However, when managed properly, the initial reaction some staff may have to the changes introduced by new technologies can be effectively minimized and eventually eliminated as they understand the value it brings to the clinical environment and patients. This means letting staff know what's coming, answering questions, addressing concerns and explaining benefits. It also means offering structured, hands-on training with the technology and an opportunity to share feedback during the early stages of implementation.

With the right framework and priorities in place, advanced technology can help ensure a more satisfying and seamless experience for patients and caregivers at the point of care. Most importantly, it can maintain the humanistic aspects involved in care delivery, allowing caregivers to reclaim their time with patients and encourage meaningful interactions.

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