



Worksite Clinics – The Next Generation

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A recent survey from Mercer found that work site clinics are becoming an increasingly popular way to control health care spending and even enhance employee productivity.

Until recently, work site clinics were largely popular only at Fortune 500 companies, however the trend is now spreading to local governments and mid-size companies of 250 or more employees.

Generally, the care received at the clinic is free to the member and there is an added convenience factor for employees. Work site clinics to date have primarily experienced their return on investment for the employer by providing more efficient care at the worksite clinic rather than paying claims from community physicians. However, the next generation of clinics are in the process of being rolled out and offers a more compelling value proposition and much greater associated healthcare savings.

The following are key concepts of this next generation of worksite clinics and how they will drive significant reductions in healthcare costs for employers.

Concept #1

At Risk Model

Worksite vendors are more increasingly willing to deliver these services with some portion of the compensation being at risk. The greater the savings to the employer, the greater the potential bonus for the vendor. In this model both the client and vendor have incentives that are congruent.

How these vendors are measuring savings or return on investment varies. The most accurate way to determine the saving generated from the on-site clinic is to compare the annual cost of health care (pmpry) for members eligible to use the clinic (“study group”) vs. members who are not eligible to use the clinic (“control group”). This provides the employer with a direct comparison of the two groups’ costs and a direct measurement of the savings.

Concept #2

Gaps In Care Analysis

Before the clinic even is launched, the employer benefits from powerful analytic software tools that can filter through the previous year’s claims data to determine gaps in care for individuals and identify “high risk” members that require additional intervention. These high-risk members can be invited to visit the clinic and enroll in on-site programs designed to ensure quality care and improved outcomes.

Concept #3

Patient Centered Medical Home

The clinicians at the worksite clinic can build a medical home model program. The medical home model understands that chronic diseases require input from multiple providers and specialists and are often difficult to manage for providers as well as the patient. The worksite clinician can act as a coordinator of care ensuring quality,



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cost effective, evidence based medicine is delivered. In addition to educating the patient on their condition, the “coordinator” communicates to all physicians involved in the care of the patient. This program acts as a very effective disease management program with member engagement levels routinely above 80 percent. The worksite clinic enrolls members who are at high risk based on the analysis of gaps in care mentioned above. Common diseases that are coordinated include diabetes, heart disease, asthma, arthritis, and chronic pain.

Concept #4

Clinical Engineering

Traditionally employers have relied solely on the carriers to negotiate agreements with providers. However, these agreements are not necessarily in the best interest of the employer or the patient. Not only can more favorable pricing be negotiated from quality providers but also, the agreements have no quality guarantees associated with them. Worksite vendors have a unique opportunity to identify high cost procedures and hospitalizations and negotiate case rates directly with providers and hospitals with built in quality performance guarantees. Significant savings for employers and members as well as improved patient outcomes are the results of these arrangements.

Concept #5

Price Transparency and Patient Advocacy

Worksite clinicians, now armed with comprehensive pricing and quality metrics, can effectively act as patient advocates assisting members with making informed medical decisions. Patients, with the assistance of the worksite clinic, can comfortably choose a cost saving option for a diagnostic or clinical procedure knowing that they are receiving quality healthcare for the right price.

Concept #6

Predictive Modeling

Worksite clinics have the ability to attach current member health risks to future costs allowing the clinics to develop targeted wellness programs that zero in on future cost drivers. In addition, the clinic can provide useful healthcare budget estimates to the employer’s benefits department when planning for next year.

Concept #7

Telemedicine

The worksite clinic is often not available for remote employees and dependents. Telemedicine, quickly becoming a mainstream method of care delivery, can address this issue. Telemedicine, via telephonic and two way video communication, can allow patients to receive medical evaluation and treatment. Not only can this be offered to members that do not have access to the on-site clinic, but also members with access to the clinic have a resource for after hours care.

Concept #8

Wellness

The clinic offers year round, on-site, integrated wellness programs that cannot only drive participation, but are very effective in modifying healthy lifestyle behaviors amongst members. Clinicians are being cross-trained as certified health coaches and up to 15% of the visits to the clinic are being utilized as purely health coaching sessions.

In summary, employers are looking for employee health solutions that offer a one-stop shop for effective healthcare cost containment. The next generation of worksite clinics promises to offer just this. The on-site clinic builds trust and relationships with members, which facilitates engagement in wellness, disease management, and patient advocacy programs driving improved outcomes and lower costs.

About the Author



Jonathan Spero, MD, is CEO of InHouse Physicians and board certified in Internal Medicine. Dr. Spero is an expert in the field of targeted employee wellness programs with measurable ROIs. InHouse Physicians is a global employee health and wellness provider delivering innovative cost containment solutions to corporations around the world. To learn more about InHouse Physicians visit their website at www.inhousephysicians.com or Dr. Spero can be reached at jspero@ihphysicians.com.

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