

HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



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Outpatient care is still trending upwards as both a convenience and cost-saving focus for consumers, employers and health plans. How have you addressed this transition and how has the growth of outpatient care advanced value in healthcare?

With COVID-19 impacting how healthcare is delivered, MemorialCare's transformation from a hospital system to an integrated healthcare network provides advantages to consumers, employers and health plans, thanks to convenient, easily accessible and lower cost outpatient services. With over 200 health centers, outpatient surgery, imaging, urgent care, breast care and dialysis centers throughout Orange County, Long Beach and the South Bay complementing our four hospitals, we can offer the best in health, wellness, prevention, disease management and treatment in the right location with substantial savings for employers, health plans and patients. Technological advances, for example, mean many surgical patients spending days in a hospital will receive care in convenient, lower cost outpatient centers without overnight hospital stays. Unlike most health systems, our ambulatory centers are not operating as Hospital-Based Outpatient Departments which receive higher reimbursement, but instead as high quality, lower priced Ambulatory Care Centers. And we're unveiling more health centers, innovative programs, progressive partnerships and comprehensive services where people live and work.

For many years we've been hearing how data and analytics can improve the quality of patient care. What type of data collection and analytics takes place during a doctors' office visit, in-hospital stay or in other settings? How are data used to improve health and prevent people from getting seriously ill? How will the use of AI and virtual reality in medicine benefit patient safety, and what will it mean for diseases that are currently incurable or difficult to treat?

Measuring healthcare quality using metrics that matter is producing remarkable results. Decades ago, MemorialCare began rigorously documenting quality through extensive outcomes assessments that identify best diagnostic, treatment and preventive methods for our hospitals, outpatient centers and physicians. Additionally, our data-warehousing and analytics platform absorbs data from numerous sources so clinicians can quickly and simply sort, refine, call out and drill down on individual patients. For example, we can quickly identify and schedule patients overdue for mammograms, colonoscopies and other life-saving screenings, and those behind on follow-up to better control diabetes, high blood pressure and other chronic diseases that prevent strokes, heart attacks and other conditions. Access to billions of data points delivers instantaneous response time for physicians to determine best courses of treatment. By moving from managing a population to an individual patient in a few clicks, we're witnessing extraordinary improvements in care, patient experiences and communications—saving lives, reducing hospitalizations and duplication, and improving community health.

Employers in Orange County are significant stakeholders in the healthcare system, seeking high quality and value-based care for their employees. How does your organization engage with corporate entities and what results do those efforts have on patient care, costs and access?

With the economic impact of coronavirus, we believe employers will be seeking better value in the care their employees receive and health benefits they offer. MemorialCare continues to address this challenge by offering more value-based options for employers than any other health system in our communities. These include tailored network products with several of the major health plans (Aetna, Blue Shield, United and Anthem), direct-to-employer customized contracts in which we accept responsibility for healthcare cost trend and quality expectations. For example, MemorialCare is The Boeing Company's preferred partner for California's first-of-its-kind customized health plan option for many Southern California Boeing employees and their dependents. In just three years this innovative partnership reduced total cost-of-care, in part by significantly decreasing pharmacy spending and dramatically reducing inpatient hospital admissions and emergency department visits. Significant enrollment growth has indicated high employee satisfaction—all leading to Boeing extending its contract with MemorialCare. With stay-in-place initiatives during the pandemic, we're supplementing our on-site work that continually engages local employers, schools and community organizations in healthy living partnerships with virtual and telehealth options.

The cost of healthcare delivery continues to be top of mind among both the consumers of healthcare as well as many employers and health plans that pay for healthcare coverage. How has your organization implemented value-based delivery to reduce the cost of care while also improving quality?

Employers and health plans continue to seek solutions to reduce healthcare expenditures while increasing quality. MemorialCare is revolutionizing value with rigorous quality, exceptional patient experience and competitive pricing. We've forged innovative partnerships for accountable care, expanded outpatient offerings and always strive for perfect care. We're streamlining processes, responding to customers' needs and empowering our staff. MemorialCare's commitment to accessibility and affordability is evident in value-based community care. MemorialCare's integrated, diversified healthcare delivery network offers a unique advantage with the region's largest number of value-based contracts with employers and health plans—critical to today's economic challenges. We're assuming financial risk for defined populations, and ensuring quality, service and cost targets are met. With hospitals and outpatient care locations stretching over a wide area, we're uniquely positioned to provide consumers, employers and health plans high-value health, wellness, prevention and, chronic disease management at the most affordable cost. As we have for over a century, our commitment to you remains unwavering.

Technology and data continue to drive innovation in the delivery of medicine to all patients – both young and old. These advances include smartphones, telemedicine, remote patient monitoring devices, etc. How have you leveraged today's technological advances to improve the health and wellbeing of the patients you serve?

Technology is increasingly allowing us to reach patients anywhere and everywhere. In addition to social distancing, hand washing and staying at home, telemedicine and virtual care between MemorialCare physicians and consumers via video, limit unnecessary exposure to COVID-19 and provide timely, convenient access to care. There are options for text messaging, artificial intelligence-enabled chats and other ways to access and expand what we're able to treat virtually without having to go to a doctors' office or health facility. We're using technology to connect primary care physicians, specialists and other clinicians. Wearable technology is enhancing care and enabling MemorialCare to monitor patients with chronic health conditions, so physicians can intervene early to address emerging issues before patients even realize they are a concern. Exciting technologies adopted by MemorialCare are translating into new realms of hope and health—coming together to deliver more efficient care, reaching patients where they are and ensuring best-in-class healthcare becomes a more seamless part of daily life.