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Reevaluating the value of primary care using design thinking

Primary care is at a critical crossroads. Our current delivery systems are unsustainable and lack the resilience to survive in new environments where total cost of care, patient experience, and patient centered outcomes are the primary determinants of success. In order for primary care to remain relevant and viable, new solutions must be created that are practical and transformative, attract and retain new patients and provide high value, high satisfaction services that meet their consumer needs. Our cost of care must come down and our quality must remain high in order for us to be able to deliver affordable care in future reimbursement realities. Our institution approached this problem by using the tools of design thinking to develop a novel patient centered approach and then implemented this population health management model across primary care clinics in multiple geographic areas. Population Health Management has become a hot topic of conversation in medical literature and popular media, but the concept is poorly defined and implementation of a population health framework is not well understood. Here we report the initial results of our implementation, which suggests increased patient and staff satisfaction with little impact on finances in a fee for service environment. We also uncovered significant cultural barriers to implementation that are likely to be universal.

Biography

Marc Matthews graduated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine and completed his residency training at the Mayo Clinic. His first task at Mayo was to redesign a community health clinic around the community's definition of health, and this work led to a deeper understanding of how the healthcare system is not very aware of what it means for a community to be healthy. He is the Associate Medical Director of the Mayo Clinic Office of Population Health Management and an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine. In these roles, he focuses on rethinking the way large healthcare organizations deliver care.

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