

Get Prepared: The Broader Impact of COVID-19

Trusted advice from our experts and your peers—backed by data

In the past few months, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed us all into a reactive state. But what about its future impact? **How can healthcare systems prepare themselves for the time period between now and a vaccine?**

We asked Peter Everett, President and Chief Operating Officer, Nasir Ali, Chief Product Officer and Alissa Link, Product Owner at NextHealth Technologies, these questions. Keep reading to learn how they think payers and providers can be proactive in these uncertain times.

Peter Everett

President and Chief Operating Officer

The COVID-19 pandemic will go through many stages, the next one being the period of time before a vaccine is available. Many areas of the country will have flattened the curve but will still struggle to maintain the right level of “openness” they should allow as they trade off pandemic control for economic restart.

During this time, we see two clear challenges emerging for health plans: managing the resurgence in health care utilization and COVID-19 testing. In the coming months, experts predict that members will begin to feel more comfortable with in-person and elective medical visits. The need for COVID-19 testing will continue, and payers will likely need to cover a significant portion of testing costs.

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To help payers manage these issues, the team at NextHealth has developed a number of **configurations in our platform that all share similar characteristics:**

- 1 Identifying members likely to engage in certain types of healthcare utilization
- 2 Predicting which of those members would likely use the healthcare system sub optimally
- 3 Designing campaigns to nudge members to access care in better ways
- 4 Determining the level of impact those campaigns and nudges have and quantifying their value
- 5 Amplifying what is working, discontinuing what is not and trying new strategies

Illustrative examples include:

- Nudging members to appropriate but lower cost testing sites
- A/B testing members through different messaging to members in need of regular care (e.g. dialysis) to return to doing so;
- Nudging members with low acuity conditions to telehealth to preserve provider capacity for higher acuity conditions;

In developing these use cases, we utilize what we call a “network learning effect” with our clients. This means identifying the common challenges they are facing, effective intervention and other strategies to mitigate them based on the collective input of our clients. We have found this to be an incredible asset to ease the struggle against the effects of the pandemic, as it allows our individual clients to tap the collective knowledge of all of them, all with significant expertise and knowledge on effective mitigations against these common challenges.

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Nasir Ali

Chief Product Officer

The COVID 19 pandemic is having a significant impact on our healthcare system across payer and provider segments. Payers across the country are focused on making care more accessible and convenient for their members while lowering their out-of-pocket costs. More clinical resources are being dedicated to Telehealth and other virtual care programs to manage care of their members effectively. These reinforcements are especially focused on providing mental and behavioral health services.

During this pandemic, it’s essential for healthcare leaders to leverage data insights to make smarter decisions about their populations to optimize the financial and clinical outcomes.

Payer business leaders are facing questions like:

- ❓ How are the results of their current case and disease management programs getting impacted?
- ❓ Can we predict resurgence trends post-pandemic to optimize resource and capital allocation?
- ❓ Can we create member interventions that would help optimize the outcome from utilization management (UM) perspective post pandemic?

NextHealth is working closely with our clients to help them address these challenges based with smart data science and AI (artificial intelligence). We're able to leverage historical data related to past events like recessions and natural disasters to accurately predict the resurgence trends for our clients.

Our clients are also able to use our platform to measure and optimize the impact of their member programs on outcome metrics like telehealth visits, cost of care post-COVID-19 diagnosis, and Urgent Care costs/visits. Payers can then create targeting programs and interventions on the NextHealth platform to optimize the outcomes and track them across segments and lines of business.

Payers have a major role in improving healthcare outcomes and they are using technology in evolving ways to address new challenges. Payers that are leveraging data insights to make intelligent decisions will not only do a better job managing through this pandemic but will also come out stronger.



Alissa Link
Product Owner

Alissa put together a [1-minute video](#) to share her thoughts on the broader impact of COVID-19. She talks about evolving virtual care practices, members managing chronic care conditions, and an often neglected aspect of care: mental health.

[Watch Video](#)

How to Get Prepared

As our country and citizens combat the pandemic, we recognize our clients have a crucial role to play. And we're responsible to help them fulfill their responsibilities to ensure their members are provided high-quality and cost-effective care.

Interested in how NextHealth could help you prepare for COVID-19's future impacts on your plan? Reach out to hello@nexthealthtechnologies.com, and we'll get a call set up.