



☰ CASE STUDY

Aledade Delaware ACO Uses Real-Time Alerts to Reduce Hospital Readmissions by 9%

Aledade Delaware Accountable Care Organization (ACO) worked with the Delaware Health Information Network (DHIN) to implement the Encounter Notification Service® (ENS®) by Audacious Inquiry to send real-time alerts about health care encounters to patients' care teams, resulting in reduced hospital readmissions and an increase in Transitional Care Management revenue.

An ACO of Independent Primary Care Practices

Aledade Delaware ACO is an organization comprised of 70 physicians in 22 independent primary care practices. ACOs are groups of physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare providers who join together to provide coordinated care for patients across the continuum of care. Founded in 2015, the Aledade Delaware ACO currently provides care for 19,736 Medicare patients throughout the state of Delaware. To improve care transitions and follow-up time, Aledade subscribes to real-time admit, discharge, transfer (ADT) data feeds through the DHIN. The goal of implementing these ADT data feeds is to improve Transitional Care Management (TCM) revenue by providing more coordinated care during transitions from one care setting back to their home or community setting.

The Challenge: Improving Transitions of Care

Recognizing the role of timely follow-up with one's primary care physician in improving health and reducing readmissions, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) began reimbursing for TCM services in 2013. Initially designed to help lower healthcare costs by reducing readmissions after a hospitalization or inpatient stay due to a lapse in care coordination, TCM services cover the 30 days following a patient discharge from a hospital or inpatient stay with the goal of helping the transition back home or to a care community.

TCM services include a dedicated care team responsible for the patient that coordinates primary care visits post-discharge and supporting medical decision-making for patients with complex medical or psychosocial needs. According to an evaluation of TCM utilization published in JAMA Network Open, in 2018, Medicare spent over \$243 million in TCM payouts to providers, the majority of which were primary care physicians. For ACOs or other healthcare providers who see Medicare patients, this could be a revenue source that contributes to improved care outcomes.

Aledade Delaware ACO reduced their readmission rates by 9% and increased their billable TCM opportunities by 26% since implementing ENS.



Receiving ADT data in real-time makes it easier for providers to meet time sensitive TCM billing requirements. Additionally, when providers have timely access to patient discharge alerts, they can contact them sooner to schedule follow-up appointments, establish a care plan, discuss medication, and review discharge instructions – all factors that contribute to reducing 30-day hospital readmission rates.

A simple follow up after hospital discharge can be an effective strategy to help with reducing readmission rates. One study published in the Global Journal on Quality and Safety in Healthcare tested the value of a follow-up call within 30 days of discharge and found that patients who received a call stayed out of the hospital longer than those who did not. ADT data feeds can help responsible care teams to reach out to their patients in a more timely manner to provide the appropriate TCM services.

Enabling Proactive Interventions with Alerts

Aledade Delaware receives ADT data powered by Audacious Inquiry's Encounter Notification Service® (ENS®) with data from the DHIN. The ADT data feed allows the ACO to send real-time alerts to the patients' care team to provide timely care coordination to reduce hospital readmissions while increasing revenue from TCM reimbursements.

When providers at Aledade are alerted to patient ADTs, they respond by reaching out to patients who have been recently admitted, discharged, or transferred from a hospital or other healthcare facility to schedule follow-ups, review medications, and develop a care plan – all factors that help keep patients from returning to the hospital.

Outcomes: Reducing Readmissions and Capturing Missed TCM Revenue

ENS data helps Aledade Delaware ACO streamline their care transitions. Well-coordinated care transitions are linked to better patient outcomes, reduced readmissions, and lower overall spending. Since implementing ENS, Aledade Delaware ACO **increased their billable TCM opportunities by 26%, resulting in approximately 41% of TCM opportunities being captured**

**26%
increase**

in billable TCM opportunities

**9%
decrease**

in readmission rates over two years

**92.3%
rating**

patient satisfaction with their provider

as of December 2017. Better care coordination and TCM services allowed the ACO to **reduce their readmission rates by 9% over a two-year period**, with a current readmission rate of 14.3% according to the latest data available from CMS.

Real-time alerts through ENS give providers the maximum amount of time to meet TCM communication and follow-up standards. This means added revenue, as non-hospital TCM services are reimbursed at an approximate rate of \$238.1

In addition, effective care coordination tools improve the patient-provider relationship: Aledade Delaware ACO's patients **rated their provider satisfaction at 92.3%**.



Without this data we wouldn't have such a streamlined workflow. As a result, our TCM numbers have improved drastically because this tool puts all the right information in front of the right people, so they can get patients the proper care they need in a timely fashion.”

— TYLER BLANCHARD ALEDADE, INC.
ACO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

