

New Rulings, Cloud Strategy Will Drive Innovation in Interoperability

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What is one area of healthcare/health IT that you believe will see significant growth in 2020?

We will see the industry continue to move toward cross-organizational interoperability — whether that's moving data from one hospital to another, from an ambulatory doctor's practice to the hospital, from a provider to a payer, or from a provider to a public health entity. This could also mean provider-to-patient interoperability. We've been moving in this direction for a while, but we'll see a new urgency this year. A number of market forces are driving this, the most pressing of which — at least in the United States — are the new rulings from the ONC and CMS, which will force healthcare organizations to develop more interoperable solutions.

Can you single out one or two top trends that everyone needs to keep an eye out for in 2020?

We expect to see improvements to hardware such as mobile devices and in-home monitors. Plus, artificial intelligence will make it cost effective to monitor large numbers of patients with a small number of practitioners. This newfound leverage has at least two implications. First, patients can be monitored in lower-acuity environments at a lower cost. Second, it will be cost effective to monitor patients with less-severe conditions, meaning earlier detection of worsening conditions. The increasing adoption of FHIR will certainly help enable this innovation.

But it's important to put these trends in context. Adopting the latest trends in technology is not a goal in itself. Technology is one piece of a solution to problems facing the healthcare system. So organizations relying on technology alone to solve a problem will have worse results than

organizations that make technology investments to serve the people and processes that solve the problem.

What will be industry leaders' greatest challenge that they must overcome in 2020?

How healthcare organizations respond to the ONC and CMS rules could prove to be challenging. Providers, payers, and tech companies that build a strategy around FHIR-based data sharing will outperform the ones that consider the rules a burdensome compliance project.

Another challenge will be continually rethinking what interoperability is. In 2020, interoperability means something different, just as it has every few years for the past 30. Interoperability is not a problem to be solved; it's a moving target that keeps changing as the software systems to be integrated change. In five years, interoperability will mean something else entirely, and the industry will wonder when we will finally get it.

Your one bold prediction for healthcare/health IT in 2020 is....

The 2020 elections will refocus the country on healthcare. At one extreme, we have Medicare for All. At the other extreme, we have tweaks to the status quo with some cuts in certain programs. Our prediction is that our country's healthcare systems — from eligibility, to reimbursement, to care management — are not ready for a change as radical as Medicare for All, so we won't get that in the next four years. At the same time, the country cannot sustain the status quo, where at times accessibility to or continuum of care is challenged by the commercial silos among different providers and different payers. We believe we'll end up with some initiatives in between that make a differ-

ence in the margins. An obvious place to invest will be in the risk-sharing Accountable Care Organization types of arrangements. These have been successful in slightly reducing healthcare spending. Another possibility is something closer to some other national models of healthcare: a single-payer system with premiums still paid by employers and employees. A single-payer model may decrease the data blockage among the providers and increase the need for more interoperability solutions.

What new innovative products and services will your company be offering in 2020?

We're seeing more CIOs developing their cloud strategy, and Lyniate will be there with products and services to meet their needs. CIOs are under constant pressure to figure out how to do things more efficiently, and IT is one of those areas that has had a huge increase in spend year-over-year within health systems. They're asking themselves, what options do we have to do this in a more cost-effective manner? Many of them are looking at the public cloud infrastructure as an answer.

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