Gaps in Care

Eliminating care gaps helps improve health and reduce costs

Gaps in care occur when individuals do not receive or adhere to care that is consistent with medically proven guidelines for prevention and treatment. These gaps can result in more serious illness and lead to higher rates of hospitalization, absences from work or personal activities, and increased costs for customers and employers.

Early detection of diseases and illnesses and better preventive care can lead to higher-quality health outcomes, which also helps drive costs lower. Screenings for serious health issues can save lives, reduce treatment recovery time, and lower health care costs. Screenings also enable higher productivity and business performance for employers. Yet despite these advantages to our customers and employers, not everyone gets recommended health screenings.
Screenings and wellness exams are crucial

There are significant gaps in care in the population, often for chronic health issues, which have high prevalence.¹

» Only 50% of Americans are screened for obesity, which affects one-third of the U.S. workforce.
» 1 in 3 people do not get screened for diabetes as recommended.
» Fewer than 1 in 10 people receive recommended screenings for depression.
» More than 1 in 4 are not screened for breast cancer.
» 1 in 3 are not screened for colorectal cancer.

Screening gaps represent missed opportunities in detection and treatment of early stages of cancer and chronic health conditions. They are usually the result of obstacles preventing customers from implementing care recommendations.

WPS uses the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) screening guidelines to identify chronic conditions and cancer screening gaps that appear within a customer’s claim history. If our analytics detect that the customer has not had an annual wellness exam or age-based preventive screening(s), we send reminders to the customer to encourage scheduling of that visit. We also work to understand the cause of the gap in care and try to remove the barrier. As an example, if a customer does not have a primary care practitioner, WPS identifies methods to locate a primary care practitioner.

In addition, WPS uses a stratification tool that helps identify which customers are not compliant with follow-up visits or diagnostic tests. The tool can identify which customers have had a service in the past and would be more likely to get one again with a “nudge” or notification.

We use custom communications that explain benefits available at no cost to a customer with a routine wellness exam visit. The goals are to reduce reluctance to seek care that is driven by a fear of surprise bills and to build a relationship between physician and patient to address risks. WPS leverages health information and the plan design, and tailors communications directly to customers to undergo the routine, medically recommended screenings.

Prevention can improve health, save money

**Improved health, reduced risk**
Wellness and cancer screening services can save lives and reduce recovery times.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that increased screening from current levels to 100% would prevent an additional 2,821 deaths from breast cancer, 6,834 deaths from cervical cancer, and 35,530 deaths from colorectal cancer over a lifetime of a single-year cohort.

- When customers have an established primary care practitioner (one of the objectives in filling identified care gaps), they are more likely to be compliant with annual screenings to detect conditions.

**Reduced costs over time**
Missed screenings have health implications for customers and productivity implications for employers. Lost opportunities to initiate early treatments may also result in longer recovery times, more time away from work, and an increased chance of exits from the labor force for older employees.

- Direct cancer-related health care in the U.S. was $183 billion in 2015 and is projected to increase to $246 billion by 2030.²

- The average disability cost for people who take leave for a health issue in less complicated stages is 4%–52% lower than the costs for those on leave with a more severe health condition. The cost difference between severe and mild forms of diseases is significant.¹
  - $6,019 per incidence for hypertension.
  - $4,622 for depression.
  - $387 for diabetes, and $2 per employee per year for lost productivity.
  - $17 per employee per year for lost productivity for depression.

The WPS gaps in care program is a powerful tool to improve employee health, increase productivity, and help reduce costs for the customer and the employer.


Get a quote today!

Contact your WPS sales representative today for more information or to request a quote.

866-297-4977 | wpshealth.com/aso