A CLEAR & PRESENT OPPORTUNITY

Integrating the Medical Home in the Age of Healthcare Consumerism

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Being a pediatrician or pediatric nurse practitioner and caring for children is rewarding, yet hard. In addition to doing what we signed up for – providing acute, chronic, preventive, and behavioral care to thousands of young patients, while following evidence-based guidelines and recommendations – we are also expected to track quality, report metrics and lead successful operations. This demands business skills in which we are largely untrained to perform and that require having a voice in everything from staffing issues and provider retention, to patient satisfaction and balance sheets.

In the last decade, two additional (and significant) challenges have been added to the 'already-too-long' list of things pediatric clinicians must think about and that threaten our ability to deliver quality care, while remaining financially viable:

- Understanding how we can keep our own patients in the pediatric medical home to support continuity of care, improved outcomes, and patient retention
- Meeting the modern healthcare consumers' demand for easy, anytime access to medical services that often compete with primary care

In this white paper, we'll explore the current situation from both the patient and provider perspectives. We will also clarify the challenge and dig into solutions that support success in each of these areas, for both practice-based and hospital-based physicians.

THE SITUATION - PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

Today's healthcare consumers want – and increasingly demand – easy access to healthcare.

Younger consumers in particular, including the Millennial parents that pediatricians serve each and every day, say convenience is a key to their satisfaction, even if it means utilizing non-traditional care channels and only considering providers who offer digital capabilities.

"Millennial parents are our new target market," says Colleen Kraft, MD, MBA, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics in the August 2018 issue of AAP News. "According to the Pew Research Center, this demographic is set to become the largest segment of our population in 2019. And soon, they will be making the bulk of purchasing decisions when it comes to pediatric care. Their expectations are different than previous generations.

They want to receive personalized care when and where they want it (a shift that already has taken place in other industries like banking and transportation). And they don't want to coordinate their schedule around their physician's schedule."

TO THIS POINT, ACCENTURE'S 2019 DIGITAL HEALTH CONSUMER SURVEY SHOWS THAT AMONG YOUNG ADULT CONSUMERS:

- **58%** say their satisfaction hinges on short wait times / speed of appointment
- **56%** say convenience of the appointment location or channel is critical
- **50+%** of consumers across all ages expect their providers to have digital capabilities
- **49%** of consumers across all ages will choose a provider who offers telehealth capabilities over one who does not
- **29%** of all consumers say they have used some form of virtual care (up from 21% in 2017)
- **47%** of all consumers have sought care at a walk-in or retail clinic

THE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE

Today's pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners are starting to grasp the threat and opportunity. We are beginning to understand the demands of healthcare consumerism and the expectations for convenient care. We want to deliver personalized, high-quality care with the hope that these things matter more than convenience, but convenience seems to be winning – even as we continue to face a variety of challenges. In addition to the aforementioned challenges, pediatricians have limited hours in a day, limited staff resources, and limited time and money to implement complicated technology solutions.

Pediatric providers are also all too familiar with today's increasingly competitive landscape, ripe with an ever-growing number of retail clinics, various types of urgent care clinics, and direct-to-consumer technology solutions that lure the patient outside of the medical home – depriving children of the benefits of specialized care and challenging physicians' ability to assure continuity of care.

According to research presented at the 2017 Pediatric Academic Societies Annual Meeting:

- 85% of pediatricians say the availability of retail based clinics negatively impacts their ability to provide care.
- 90% have had negative experiences, including disagreements with treatment protocol or difficulty maintaining patient records due to retail-based clinics.
- 64% have experienced a decline in visits (vs. 24% in 2008).
- 39% are concerned about competition (vs. 27% in 2008).

IN AN EFFORT TO ADDRESS THESE COMBINED CHALLENGES, TODAY'S PROVIDERS ARE SEEKING SOLUTIONS THAT:

- Improve access to care, while also improving operational efficiency
- Improve patient outcomes
- Improve patient satisfaction
- Prevent patient loss to other offerings
- Guide patients to quality pediatric care when needed
- Prevent costly and often unnecessary ER visits
- Drive revenue

In the end, all pediatric providers want children to get the best pediatric care possible and have great outcomes.

OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE

There is good news. The challenge for pediatricians who want to heed the call of the modern consumer (especially Millennial parents) and challenge care models that take the patient outside of the pediatric medical home (from retail-based clinics to direct-to-consumer tech) is clear.

Identify and implement solutions that:

- Connects consumers, the parents, with the doctors they know and trust (you or your preferred partners) in new ways – giving them the access they want and expect.
- Keep patients in your office or guide them to the care you trust that includes the medical home – reducing the loss to retail clinics and other competing "solutions."
- Are simple and cost-effective for both your practice and your patients – simultaneously supporting both patient and provider satisfaction and driving operational efficiency.

Lead the way by overcoming challenges:

- Pediatricians need to become early adopters of telemedicine technology. Best practices and key influencers are needed to lead the way for provider adoption
- Recognize the impact of telephone triage on your practice and how telemedicine can enhance this offering to patients
- Don't let uncertainty hold you back. Your patients are far better seeing you via telemedicine and gaining your care and guidance than seeking care without reaching out to the medical home.
- Get started: behavioral and mental health are great ways to start. You can also consider minor sick visits, triage, lactation guidance, medication management and nutrition visits.

IN THE END, ALL PEDIATRIC PROVIDERS WANT CHILDREN TO GET THE BEST PEDIATRIC CARE POSSIBLE AND HAVE GREAT OUTCOMES.

DON’T FORGET THE UNDERSERVED

Technology is widening the disparity gap for access to care and we as pediatricians need to advocate for the payment of affordable access to technology for all patients.

ADVOCATE FOR ADEQUATE PAYMENT FOR TELEHEALTH AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND LESSEN THE TRAVEL BARRIER FOR THE UNDERSERVED.

THE SOLUTION

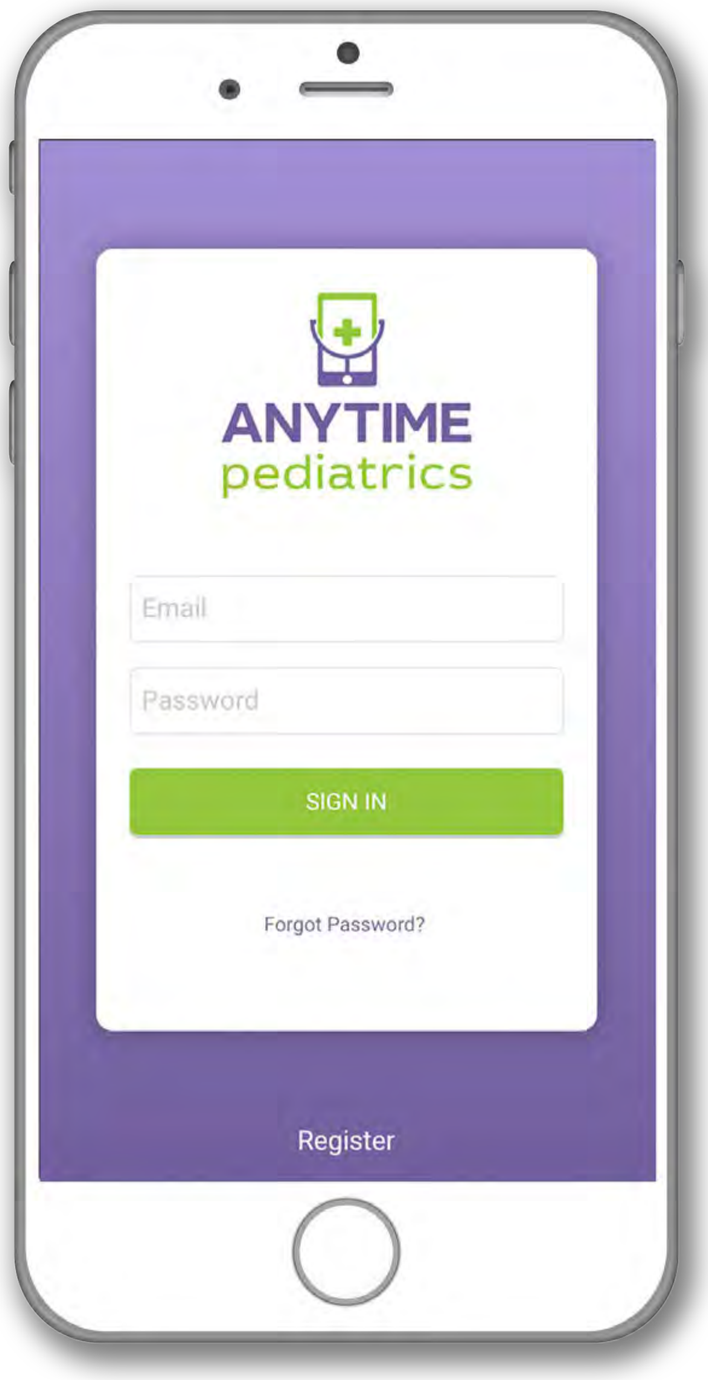
While it is easy to believe these challenges require big ideas and huge investments of time and money, or that the local pediatric provider can't compete with these challenges, that's not necessarily the case. Consider these easy-to-implement, easy-to-manage, easy-on-the-budget solutions:

Proactively encourage parents to call your office after hours. Whether members of your own clinical staff field calls or you leverage a call center, standardized triage protocols help parents stay connected to the medical home.

Understand all of the care options in your community and be a resource for your families on the best places to go if they have an urgent or emergent need. Parents have so many options and they need your guidance. If you are unable to offer care, guide parents to partners you trust, such as pediatric urgent cares, children's hospital emergency departments, and other specialized resources within your network, rather than leaving them to fend for themselves. These options will positively impact the support of the continuity of care and prevent patient loss.

PROVIDE A VIRTUAL CARE OPTION (AND PROMOTE IT HEAVILY)

While many direct-to-consumer options take patients outside of the medical home (connecting parents with a random physician who is employed by the telemedicine service, rather than you), technology solutions like Anytime Pediatrics provide an easy, affordable way to connect your office with your patients virtually from the device of their choice, whether that be a smart phone, tablet, or desktop. And research consistently shows that today's patients want a telehealth option.



- **76%** of patients prioritize access to care over the need for an in person visit with their provider. (American Hospital Association)
- **77%** of patients want access to virtual care. (The Advisory Board)
- **46%** of patients who use telehealth would otherwise go to urgent care; 5.6% would go to the ER. (Red Quill Consulting)
- **49%** of consumers across all ages will choose a provider who offers telehealth capabilities over one who does not. (Accenture)

“VIRTUAL CARE THAT CONNECTS YOUR PATIENTS WITH YOU OFFERS SO MANY BENEFITS BEYOND SIMPLY ADDRESSING CONSUMER DEMANDS FOR CONVENIENCE”

- Mick Connors, MD, a practicing pediatric emergency physician and founder of Anytime Pediatrics

“During office hours, telemedicine allows you to better expedite care for those who need it. It also allows a path for home care when an office visit isn’t really necessary. After hours, virtual care allows you to triage and treat patients more effectively, because it lets you get a ‘read’ on the situation in ways a telephone consult can’t. Most importantly, it ensures your young patients always get the specialized care or guidance they need and deserve from the pediatric provider they trust most – you.”

ACCORDING TO CONNORS, THERE ARE FIVE IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A VIRTUAL CARE SOLUTION:

1. Most importantly: To safeguard the patient provider relationship and the quality of care you would want for your own child, utilize a virtual care solution that will keep the child in the medical home or that connects your families with a pediatric provider that you trust. Don't leave care to an unknown clinician or practice.

2. To implement virtual care in a way that makes . sense for you and your practice/department, look for a technology partner that allows you the freedom to customize the days, hours, and types of visits you will provide via telemedicine. You technology partner should also be able to customize the system to support your workflows.

3. For times when a virtual care request comes in and you are not available, you will want a solution with smart call-routing capabilities. This way, your parent is connected to the pediatrician, pediatric urgent care, or children's hospital partner of your choice – again supporting the value of the medical home.

4. Launching a virtual care program can b challenging, so you will want a partner that offers provider and staff training; support over the long term; and marketing content and tools to help you inform and educate patients about your new offering.

5. Speaking of patients, you will want a solution that is simple and intuitive for your parents/families and your providers, whether they are on a smartphone, tablet, or desktop. The fewer and clearer the steps required to connect you and your patients, the better.

CONCLUSION

Millennial healthcare consumers have clear expectations: They want to access medical care when and how it's most convenient for them. Similarly, the threats associated with the ever-growing number of retail clinics, urgent care clinics, and direct-to-consumer technology solutions are clear. For pediatric providers to survive, they must embrace solutions that help keep patients in the pediatric medical home. Addressing these challenges is not only possible, but relatively simple with proactive patient communications and education, and the introduction of virtual care into the traditional care model.

ABOUT ANYTIME PEDIATRICS

Anytime Pediatrics is a company committed to connecting patients to the healthcare providers they trust most – at any time and from anywhere – using its simple, affordable telehealth software solution.

Anytime Pediatrics was founded in 2016 by Dr. Mick Connors, MD, a long-time pediatrician and father of four with a deep understanding of the undeniable value of a family's relationship with their pediatric provider. It was this understanding that inspired him to create a solution ... a connector... to help ensure patients access quality healthcare when they needed it, from their computer or mobile device, with their preferred physician, and at a price they understand and can afford. In this vision, Anytime Pediatrics was born.

ANYTIME PEDIATRICS IS DIFFERENTIATED FROM OTHERS IN THE VIRTUAL CARE SPACE IN IMPORTANT WAYS

1. Our “Software as a Solution (SaaS)” model means that we exist to help physicians and pediatric clinicians build their practices through collaboration – not competition.

2. We believe in the power of keeping care local. This is why we work with board-certified pediatric practices and pediatric partners nationwide. If we aren’t able to connect your patients to you, we want you to guide them to partners you choose.

3. Anytime Pediatrics was designed for pediatric providers by a pediatrician, who understands that children need and benefit from specialized care that isn’t often found at the random retail or urgent care clinic on the corner, or with a random provider on the Internet. Kids need their pediatrician or the guidance of another trusted pediatrician to receive care they trust.

4. We allow you to innovate and consider how to offer patients convenience and access to trusted care. Think about how virtual care could be integrated with the medical home to connect your patients to sick care, behavioral health, lactation and nutrition consultation. Pediatricians also consider offering care to students at college, children in daycare or those attending camp, away from home for the summer.

To learn more, **connect** with us.