



Group Medicare Insights: Member Experience

Driving better outcomes with a model focused on senior healthcare



By improving access to care and providing tailored services, organizations that focus on senior healthcare, like Humana, help older adults achieve their best health.

It's easy to understand why the older adult population's unique set of needs requires a different approach to care, considering 80% of adults aged 60 and over manage at least two chronic conditions¹ and more than half of seniors take multiple prescription medications.²

Against this background, healthcare models that work for other segments of the population are often inadequate when it comes to meeting the needs of older adults.

Healthcare isn't one-size-fits-all, and catering to the unique physical, social, and emotional needs of older adults is essential to ensure this group achieves the best outcomes possible, which ultimately benefits everyone. Given that the senior population in the U.S. is expected to surge—the number of Americans aged 65 and older is projected to increase from 58 million in 2022 to 82 million by 2050 (a 47% increase)³—there is an urgent need for healthcare models specifically tailored to older adults.

Driving better outcomes with a model focused on senior healthcare

“Seniors need a lot more care coordination and care resources—that’s what senior-centered care is all about,” says Angela Handa, National Sales Executive, Group Medicare, at Humana. “It’s geared towards the retired person who has higher needs and it’s organized around those needs.”

Traditional vs. senior-focused care

Most traditional primary care organizations aren’t equipped to handle the very specific needs of older adults. In a traditional setting, a provider will typically have a patient panel comprised of individuals with wide-ranging needs. “The physician could be seeing Medicare members along with pediatric patients and younger commercial members that don’t have multiple chronic conditions—those are all different patient populations,” says Dr. Rae Godsey, Chief Medical Officer, Group Medicare, at Humana.

Given that older adults grappling with several chronic conditions rely on multiple specialists to manage their health, a value-based care model that follows an integrated approach to healthcare is especially important for the 65+ demographic.

“An integrated care delivery system ensures the entire care team is informed about what’s going on with the member,” says Dr. Godsey. She gives an example of a member with diabetes who might need to see an endocrinologist, registered dietitian, ophthalmologist, and podiatrist, highlighting the importance of care coordination among multiple specialists.

Beyond coordination of care, senior-focused health organizations facilitate better access to primary care. According to a joint study

Dr. Rae Godsey, Group Medicare Chief Medical Officer at Humana was recently named one of the **TOP 50 WOMEN LEADERS OF KENTUCKY FOR 2024**⁴



conducted by Humana and a leading researcher and professor at Harvard University, patients of value-based, senior-focused primary care organizations had 17% more primary care visits compared with patients in traditional primary care settings.⁵ The benefits are even more pronounced for Black and low-income beneficiaries, who had 39% and 21% more visits in senior-focused primary care organizations, respectively, than Black and low-income beneficiaries in other primary care settings.⁶

The study’s findings also suggest that patients of senior-focused primary care organizations may experience better performance on quality measures such as recommended cancer screenings, medication adherence, and controlled blood pressure for patients with diabetes.⁷

The CenterWell difference: quality care leads to better outcomes

Older adults in care settings focused on seniors typically have longer appointment times with physicians, thanks to the value-based model in which compensation isn’t tied to the number of patients the provider sees in a day.



A subsidiary of Humana, CenterWell provides a range of senior care services and operates 300 primary care centers across 15 states, with many located in medically underserved areas. Physicians working at CenterWell centers tend to have smaller patient panels, affording them extra time with each individual patient. CenterWell doctors spend an average of 50% more one-on-one time with their patients compared with doctors working in traditional primary care settings.⁸ This gives physicians the time they need to properly address a patient's medical concerns and follow up on important items such as medication adherence.

CenterWell doctors spend an average of

50% more one-on-one time

with their patients compared with doctors working in traditional primary care settings.

“At senior primary care centers, doctors set aside about 45 minutes for an appointment, and there’s a care team that works with the senior,” says Handa. “It’s very different from the average person going to see the doctor and getting 15 or 20 minutes once a year.”

Every aspect of CenterWell’s centers is customized for the older adult population, including the environment and specific design

“At senior primary care centers, doctors set aside about 45 minutes for an appointment, and there’s a care team that works with the senior, it’s very different from the average person going to see the doctor and getting 15 or 20 minutes once a year.”

Angela Handa, National Sales Executive, Group Medicare, at Humana.

elements. Unique features that facilitate easier visits include anti-slip flooring, wider hallways that accommodate wheelchairs, and easy-to-navigate exam chairs in place of traditional exam tables. The clinics’ offerings also extend beyond primary care services. CenterWell centers function as community hubs that engage seniors with health and wellness programming and social events, such as fitness classes, craft lessons, bingo nights, and healthy eating webinars.

“We create an environment that seniors can thrive in from a health perspective while also providing an aspect of community in our centers,” says Rich Vollmer, SVP of Patient Acquisition and Retention at CenterWell. “Those things really drive the differentiated experience, which puts us in a unique spot within the Medicare Advantage population.”

Vollmer adds that CenterWell’s centers are typically located in “primary care deserts”—communities where access to care has



Driving better outcomes with a model focused on senior healthcare

historically been very limited. “Our model brings care to places where there are a lot of seniors in need of primary care,” he says.

CenterWell also offers other senior-focused services, including home healthcare solutions and a specialty pharmacy to help older adults manage their conditions while providing a dedicated care team for support.

How value-based care aligns with a senior-focused model

A major benefit of the value-based care model adopted by CenterWell is that it emphasizes quality care and smaller patient panels, providing physicians with the time and resources they need to properly care for patients. By bringing physicians back to the main reason many chose to pursue a career in healthcare in the first place, this model helps attract doctors. This is especially important given projections of a nationwide shortage of up to 86,000 physicians by 2036, according to The Association of American Medical Colleges.⁹

“Because we have a unique model that isn’t driven on patient volume, like a fee-for-service type of approach, this is a primary care business that clinicians want to get into,” says Vollmer. “So we are helping to solve the issue of a relative shortage of primary care for an aging population.”

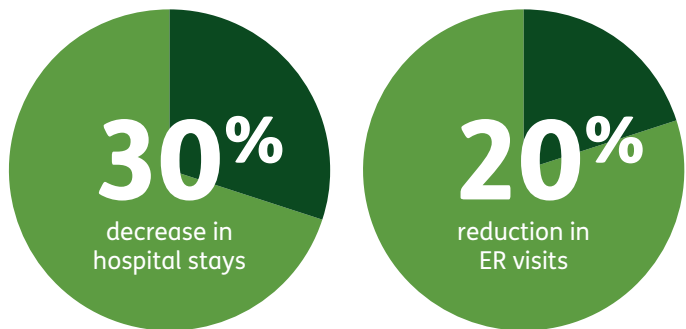
Handa points out that the value-based care model entails other benefits for retirees and employers, such as lower costs. “People are happier and more satisfied and there are lower costs because of fewer emergency visits and hospitalizations,” she says.

Indeed, patients of CenterWell clinics have a 30% decrease in hospital stays and 20% reduction in ER visits, according to CenterWell data.¹⁰

Future outlook

As the senior population in the United States continues to grow, more older adults will become eligible for Medicare. Given that enrollment in Medicare Advantage now outpaces enrollment in Original Medicare (in 2024, 54% of eligible Medicare beneficiaries were enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans¹¹), it is likely that an increasing number of seniors will be enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans going forward, especially as Medicare-eligible seniors comprise an ever-

Patients of CenterWell clinics have a



According to CenterWell data.

growing share of the total U.S. population. When choosing between plans, those offered by organizations that focus on senior healthcare like Humana will be especially appealing.

“You’re going to see significant growth in this space given the sheer number of eligible seniors,” says Vollmer. Because of this, he believes



Driving better outcomes with a model focused on senior healthcare

CenterWell will be an important part of Humana's business model going forward. "CenterWell's senior-centered model is a perfect complement to the focus of Humana's business," he says.

With a growing senior population and a looming shortage of primary care physicians, Handa notes that Humana is preparing for the future by partnering with medical schools to incorporate education in a value-based care approach as they train the physicians of tomorrow.

"CenterWell's senior-centered model is a perfect complement to the focus of Humana's business,"

Rich Vollmer, SVP of Patient Acquisition and Retention at CenterWell

"This is something unique to Humana," says Handa. "It's an investment we've made that will make a difference in the future, including the future of senior-focused care."

1 <https://www.ncoa.org/article/the-top-10-most-common-chronic-conditions-in-older-adults/>

2 <https://www.kff.org/affordable-care-act/issue-brief/data-note-prescription-drugs-and-older-adults/>

3 <https://www.prb.org/resources/fact-sheet-aging-in-the-united-states/>

4 <https://thewomenweadmire.com/2024/12/the-top-50-women-leaders-of-kentucky-for-2024/>

5 <https://www.lanereport.com/176310/2024/09/humana-study-senior-focused-care-gives-better-outcomes/>

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 <https://www.centerwellprimarycare.com/en.html>

9 <https://www.aamc.org/news/press-releases/new-aamc-report-shows-continuing-projected-physician-shortage/>

10 <https://www.centerwellprimarycare.com/>

11 <https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-in-2024-enrollment-update-and-key-trends/>

To learn more, visit **Humana Group Medicare**