

Reimagining the ACO: The Art of Experience Transformation

A Witt/Kieffer Case Study

At **Mosaic Life Care**, transformation is a long, creative journey that engages patients, families, and communities.

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Organization:

Mosaic Life Care

Challenge:

Transform the organization's business model and position it as a clear, innovative leader in the post-reform marketplace

Solution:

Create and implement a new vision of healthcare; focus on all aspects of patient health and well-being, with an emphasis on providing an exceptional experience

The healthcare industry is changing rapidly, unpredictably. As organizations adapt to policy reforms, increased competition, and widespread consolidation, they are also sharpening their focus on providing value-based, patient-centered care. While all providers are moving in new directions, a select few are developing truly different, outside-the-box models of care and services. One such industry leader is Mosaic Life Care.

Mosaic Life Care—which consists of eight locations in north Kansas City, Missouri, is operated by Heartland Health—has a mission of promoting *life* improvement as much as health improvement. It does not like to think of its facilities as merely hospitals, clinics, or medical centers—although it is a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network and has “traditional” offerings such as primary, urgent and specialty care; an imaging center; outpatient surgery; and occupational, physical and speech therapy. Rather, each Life Care site is creatively oriented around supporting individuals in leading healthy and productive lives, not just in treating illnesses or conditions.



Mark Laney, MD
President and CEO
Mosaic Life Care

“We call this Experience Transformation,” says Mark Laney, MD, Mosaic Life Care’s President and CEO. “Experience Transformation means being more patient-centered, physician-centered, more outpatient-centered. It is about making patients more empowered in being part of the decision-making process regarding treatments, lifestyle improvements, and other options available to help them be happy and productive.”

Experience Transformation encompasses both the *organization’s* experience of going through the process of transforming healthcare services (see Dr. Laney’s “The 12 Steps of Experience Transformation” beginning on page 2) as well as the *patient’s* experience of a new model of healthcare. For both, the focus of healthcare is broadened to include the many facets of life improvements.

An Emphasis on Life Improvement

“Experience Transformation is a bridge to the future of how medicine will be practiced,” Dr. Laney continues. “This is going to be hard for some people. It’s a different experience of delivering healthcare. We’ve asked patients what they want — open access, extended hours, etc. — and we are giving them the experience they desire. In that respect, these changes are also competitive advantages.”

As one of the chief architects of this transformation, Dr. Laney espouses original, progressive ideas on how providers can best serve their communities. The point, he says, is to create a new, vibrant model of healthcare.

Mosaic complements its traditional services with a range of unconventional programs aimed at helping patients achieve their personal and professional potential by addressing any of the “7 Pillars” or categories of health: health, finances, career, relationships, lifestyle, inner peace, and creativity.

As part of this holistic vision, Mosaic offers, for instance, health and life coaching sessions. Patients can work with a professional Life Coach to help make positive, transformational changes in all areas of their lives, from diet and exercise habits to improvements in relationships, careers, and financial practices — all of which contribute to a patient’s overall health.

The program extends to employers as well. Mosaic provides wellness programs for places of business, with an eye toward helping them to manage healthcare costs. The programs address issues such as health coaching, weight loss, tobacco cessation, and overall life coaching in customizable wellness packages

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No Waiting Rooms?

The design of Mosaic’s eight locations also contributes to the model. The décor conveys a relaxed and colorful environment, often with features that incorporate water—such as the 40-foot waterfall at the Shoal Creek location—because water is calming and symbolizes life.

One of the more unusual design elements involves the waiting rooms, or rather, the lack of waiting rooms. Mosaic does not have waiting rooms at all. When patients enter the facility they are greeted, registered, and immediately directed to an exam room. Healthcare industry patient-satisfaction surveys have shown that as wait time increases, patient satisfaction decreases.

“The wait-time factor is part of being more patient-centered,” says Dr. Laney. “No more ‘wave scheduling just specific times scheduled for each patient.”

Dr. Laney says that city planners rejected Mosaic’s architectural plans at first because there were no waiting rooms in the blueprints. When Mosaic informed them that leaving out waiting rooms was not an oversight but a deliberate design as part of a new model of healthcare, the planners were impressed and gave their approval.

A kitchen area offers healthy food choices in addition to cooking demonstrations, a menu that changes daily, and a community space with free Wi-Fi to encourage community members to drop in and hang out at the coffee shop.

As community engagement plays an important role in the Life Care model, a section of the facility is made available for special occasions — weddings, corporate gatherings, family reunions, live music shows and other community-

The 12 Steps of Experience Transformation

By Mark Laney, MD, Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care

1. Decide to go on the journey. You can’t abruptly decide to start an ACO. It takes years of work to position an organization; that’s why some fight to hold on to old models. See where the future is going and accept that it’s a long journey.

2. Select an experienced guide Organizations will probably need help in their weaker areas—e.g., IT, physician alignment, etc. Reach out to experts and consultants with experience in transforming key areas.

3. Travel far away together. To be creative, leaders and staff have to get out of their own environment. Travel together to get away from your home base; it creates a bond among the team and a space for creative thinking

4. Let go of all preconceived ideas. If you can’t let go of the past, it’s unlikely you will be transformational.

5. Start with the end in mind. Envision the end point in all its aspects, and then work backwards to establish how you will get to the end incrementally.

6. See the world through the eyes of patients and their families. Be patient-centric. Look through their eyes and imagine their wants and needs.

7. Accept that “work is theatre.” This is the most controversial of the steps. We believe that when we have interactions with patients in the clinic or hospital we are on stage. We have to have 100% focus, concentrating on

“when you are an ACO, you think about patients when they are not even patients.”

what we say and do. We have to be at our best. One thing we do for our staff is to create spaces where they can be “off stage” for breaks to gather themselves and rejuvenate.

8. Appeal to all of the senses. This is part of the experience model. Research shows that what patients see, hear, smell, etc. all leave an impression of having a healing, positive experience.

9. Celebrate with life ceremonies and events. Mosaic is not about having patients see their doctors twice a year when they are sick. That’s not building

based events. Mosaic is considering other programs to cultivate community involvement such as children’s story hours, a farmer’s market, and exercise classes.

To extend the experience beyond the facility, Mosaic’s new interactive website (mymosaiclifecare.org) gives patients access to their medical records and the ability to email physicians, manage prescriptions, view appointment availability and more.

New Name, New Vision

Mosaic Life Care is the new name, new vision, and work-in-progress of Heartland Health.

Based in St. Joseph, Missouri, Heartland Health includes a 352-bed medical center, a physician group practice employing 173 physicians and advanced practice nurses (APRNs) in clinics in St. Joseph and its new Mosaic Life Care locations in north Kansas City. Since 1984, Heartland has grown to become one of the largest and most respected healthcare providers in the region. Its success has been due in part to its innovative and evolving approach to healthcare, the same approach that will eventually lead the organization to undergo a complete transformation to Mosaic Life Care.

It is expected that within two to four years every Heartland building, clinic, and even the hospital will be redesigned and rebranded as Mosaic Life Care employing its innovative Life Care model.

a relationship. To have a relationship we need more continuous communication and that involves celebrating life together. For example, we have weddings at our Life Center and we host community meetings after hours. It’s not just a clinic, it’s also a community asset.

10. Create memories and emotional closeness. As a life center and community asset, we develop a personal relationship with patients, a sense of community.

11. Understand that the experience is as much for the caregivers. The experience is for caregivers too. By giving the caregivers a positive experience they are happier, more fulfilled, and do better work. Job satisfaction scores reflect the benefits of this approach.

12. The experience results in a new transformational relationship. This is the bridge to the future: not healthcare but *Life Care*.

“ACOs are not the end of the journey.”

A New Wrinkle on the ACO Model

Made possible by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) model is voluntarily adopted. It is a model of coordinated care working with Medicare to improve the efficiency and ultimate results of services.

“Many caregivers are probably thinking, ‘We already do that.’” says Linda Bahrke, RN, chief administrator of Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care’s community health and services and the system’s ACO. “But when you are an ACO, you think about patients when they are not even patients. You think about them as they are living their lives in the community. It’s a much more proactive approach. It’s about actually reaching out and really taking ownership of that population regardless of whether or not they are seeking healthcare.”

Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care was recently named one of Becker’s Hospital’s “100 Accountable Care Organizations to Know.” Heartland Health received the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2009 and the organization has received an “A” rating by the Leapfrog Group for the past two years. It is also recognized as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures by the Joint Commission.

As an ACO under the Medicare Shared Savings Program since July 2012, Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care serves more than 12,000 lives within the ACO community. Shared Savings Program participants are eligible to receive refunds after submitting data to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to show that they are achieving the “triple aim” of cost, quality, and satisfaction goals.

In the most recent award period, 114 ACOs submitted their data, but only 29 received shared savings. Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care was one of those 29. Having saved CMS more than \$6 million, the organization received a shared savings of nearly \$3 million.

While ACOs are an improvement, says Dr. Laney, they are not the answer. “ACOs are not the end of the journey,” says Dr. Laney. “They are one step toward another payment mechanism, which is probably going to be capitation.”

Capitation is a payment arrangement in which healthcare providers are given a set amount of funds to take care of each enrolled person in a population, whether or not they seek care. “That’s the direction that we are ultimately going,” says Dr. Laney. “Fee-for-service is not dead, but it’s on a ventilator in the ICU. Being innovative and adopting some of these new payment mechanisms is the future, and that’s why Mosaic is an early adopter.”

Conclusion

Transforming the healthcare industry, redefining organizations and services—these are massive undertakings that require thinking about old challenges in new ways and taking the risk to try out fresh, bold, and creative models. Heartland Health and Mosaic Life Care is leading the industry in its efforts to remodel the healthcare experience to revolve around patients, their service experience, and their health needs and life goals. It is a model the entire industry can look to for ideas and inspiration as the paradigm of healthcare in America continues to evolve.

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