

Pyx Health & The Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge:

Introduction

The Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge was a unique partnership between Arizona Medicaid (AHCCCS) and Adaptation Health that bridged the gap between market need and market-ready solutions. The Challenge represented a new approach to building stronger collaboration and capacity within the Medicaid ecosystem by identifying best-in-class innovation that could solve for explicit needs in the right way

The final presentations by vendors in Phoenix were the culmination of a four-month process. Adaptation Health worked with AHCCCS and state Managed Care Organization (MCO) leadership to identify two discrete challenge in care delivery and created a national call for applications from market-ready, pioneering healthcare entrepreneurs. The two challenges were social determinants of health risk identification and referrals and (separately) digital member engagement. From a pool of 65 applicants, they facilitated a selection committee of MCO and State leadership to choose the eight finalists who presented their business models and solutions to all seven

MCOs in Arizona. The companies presented on how their solutions could bring value to Arizona Medicaid in addressing the two challenges. Presentations can be seen on [Adaptation Health's YouTube Channel](#).

Arizona Medicaid Director Jami Snyder said the value of the project was the ability to "...provide plan leaders with the tools and capacity to identify promising vendors to address the next generation of challenges in Medicaid delivery." Following the project Jami Snyder reflected by saying, "Having Adaptation Health deliver a curated set of presentations and frame the discussion allowed us the opportunity to compare approaches and even explore collaboration opportunities across one or more solutions." Ultimately this helped drive better product-market-fit and new vendor relationships in Arizona. In closing the Challenge, Snyder said, "Together, at a state and system level, our goal is to ensure we're using these solutions to move the needle on health outcomes for the bulk of the Medicaid population." This case study details one company's story and success in the year following their participation in the Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge.

Pyx Health

Background and Product

Pyx Health is the first loneliness and social isolation technology solution serving health plan populations who have historically been forgotten by technology: Medicaid and Medicare members. CEO Cindy Jordan founded Pyx Health after seeing a family member's physical and mental health decline rapidly over a period of a year. While caring for them, Cindy learned about gaps in healthcare and the pervasive loneliness and social isolation epidemic affecting vulnerable populations. Vowing to wage a war on loneliness, Cindy created an impactful solution marrying technology and compassionate human interventions; and in 2017, the Pyx Health solution was born.

At the heart of Pyx Health is Pyxir, an endearing chatbot personality that walks alongside health plan members in their health care journey. Affectionately referred to as 'he' by members, Pyxir promotes healthy interaction within the app by building trusted companionship, providing support and self-management tips, all while delivering regular evidence-based screenings for loneliness and social determinants of health (SDOH). When urgent needs are identified in the app, Pyx Health offers 24/7 access to resources such as food, transportation and a nurse hotline, which is reinforced with a human touch from the compassionate call center.



Pyx Health is proving to improve member outcomes and drastically reduce costs to the healthcare system. One Pyx Health client – a large integrated Medicaid Managed Care health plan in the Southwest – completed a case study that showed a net reduction of 46% in inpatient spend for Pyx Health users during a 6-month period over control group patients who did not use the Pyx Health app. And from the patient standpoint, 93% reported feeling healthier after just 30 days of using the app; with 65% reporting that the app made them feel more connected to their healthcare team.

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Impact of the Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge

Being selected to be one of the finalists in the Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge was a game-changer for Pyx Health. It raised the profile of the company significantly within the state of Arizona and provided a forum for all of the MCOs to come together to identify solutions that were relevant to their members and their plan. Simply by making it through the rigorous process of becoming a finalist, Pyx Health built credibility among the C-suite executives who attended the presentations.

Following the Challenge, the Pyx team had Executive Level meetings with every MCO in Arizona. Many of those plans conducted evaluations of Pyx Health; and, subsequently, several are now contracting with Pyx. One of those plans, Arizona Complete Health (AZCH), learned about Pyx Health through the Arizona Medicaid Innovation Challenge. James Stover, Arizona Complete Health CEO said that "finding a technology solution that is built specifically for Medicaid members made us extremely interested in learning more about Pyx Health. What sold us on this solution was their focus on addressing loneliness with smart technology and intentional human intervention. We know that this partnership will improve how our members are feeling and infuse innovation into our digital strategy."

Pyx Health is expecting to double its revenue this year and grow from 22 to 40 employees. In addition to Arizona contracts, they have two clients in North Carolina and are talking seriously with health plans in Kentucky, Texas, Ohio, and Tennessee.

Cindy Jordan agrees, "Being part of Adaptation Health's Medicaid Innovation Challenge was an incredible opportunity for our company and catapulted us within the state of Arizona. We look forward to working more with Adaptation Health as they continue to expand and host Medicaid Innovation Challenges in additional states."

"The problem that Pyx Health is solving can no longer be ignored by health plan executives. Part of what made this Medicaid Innovation Challenge so successful was bringing innovative companies like Pyx Health together with like-minded CEO's to create long-lasting partnerships, which Pyx Health has successfully capitalized on."

- former AHCCCS director Tom Betlach