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Achieving Results Through Value-Based, Comprehensive Care

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Value-Based Innovations Drive Improved Care

Practices see better outcomes through comprehensive, preventive approaches

By Jim Braibish, St. Louis Metropolitan Medicine

Wellness coordinators. Extended physician visits. Well-being checks. No-cost colonoscopies and other screenings. Community health classes. These preventive health measures and innovations are being carried out by St. Louis-area practices through accountable care organizations (ACOs) and Medicare Advantage incentives. They also represent a move toward value-based care. Here is a look at several.

Esse Health

Founded in 1995, Esse Health now serves over 168,000 patients at 49 offices in the metropolitan St. Louis region. These include around 30,000 Medicare Advantage patients, 10,000 Medicare patients through the Esse Health ACO and 46,000 commercial shared savings patients. There are 104 primary care physicians, 19 specialist physicians and 55 advanced-practice professionals.

“Our goal is to devote more time to keeping our patients healthy—delaying disease onset, preventing complications, and focusing on population management,” said Rishi Sud, MD, MBA, chief medical officer of Esse Health.

“The current health care delivery system in this country is broken and unsustainable. Value-based care, in contrast, yields better outcomes, improves patients’ quality of life, reduces costs, and allows providers to be engaged and fulfilled.”

— Esse Health

Among the comprehensive services that Esse Health offers include a team of health coaches, care managers, dietitians and social workers working with the patient to create and implement a personal plan of care tailored to individual needs.



Dr. Rishi Sud

“As an independent physician organization, we have a strong history of achieving high quality and lower total cost of care, keeping our patients well, and preserving the joy of practicing medicine for our physicians,” Dr. Sud commented. He noted that, after accounting for retirements, Esse Health has an approximate annual retention rate of 99.5% among its 100-plus physicians.

In October, Esse Health merged with the St. Louis-based population health services company Navvis. Each will continue to operate as separate entities under the new parent company Surround Care. The merger gives Surround Care operations in nine states, 4,600 physicians and over four million patients. The patient count includes 2.53 million commercial lives, 565,000 Medicare lives and 930,000 Medicaid lives.

“Surround Care represents a new opportunity for physicians nationwide to leverage the deep expertise and processes that Navvis and Esse have to drive better health and high performance in value-based care,” Dr. Sud said.

He sees value-based care as the future: “The current health care delivery system in this country is broken and unsustainable. Nationally, we spend \$4.1 trillion, which is 20% of our national GDP. Value-based care, in contrast, yields better outcomes, improves patients’ quality of life, reduces costs, and allows providers to be engaged and fulfilled,” he said.

“Value-based care gives Esse Health physicians the ability to identify and diagnose early, be careful stewards of our patients’ health care dollars with proper coding, and treat aggressively to avoid the progression of the diseases—to keep patients as well as possible,” Dr. Sud concluded.

