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Partnering for Better Hypertension Outcomes: How AMA and Azara Support Providers

Announcer:

You're listening to *Perspectives with the AMA* on ReachMD, produced in partnership with the American Medical Association. Here's your host, Dr. Charles Turck.

Dr. Turck:

This is *Perspectives with the AMA* on ReachMD, and I'm Dr. Charles Turck. Joining me to discuss the collaborative relationship between the American Medical Association and Azara Healthcare is their President and CEO, Mr. Jeff Brandes. Mr. Brandes, welcome to the program.

Mr. Brandes:

Thank you. Excited to be here today.

Dr. Turck:

Well, if we start with some background, Mr. Brandes, what does the general profile of an Azara user look like? And how does your platform help them provide better care for their patients?

Mr. Brandes:

Yeah, so the user of the Azara Population Health platform is really a wide range of users within the clinic. I think the most relevant set of users for what we're going to talk about today are the people on the frontlines delivering care, whether that's providers, MAs, nurse practitioners, etc. But really, the Azara platform was designed to service multiple user personas within the clinic, including those that are managing and monitoring the quality of the care delivered, maybe on a retrospective basis. But ideally, it all starts with the provider and their interaction with the patient—making sure they're well prepared and that the work that our system calls out is something that fits easily within the existing workflow.

Dr. Turck:

Now, with that background in mind, let's focus on collaboration. Would you give us a snapshot of the current dynamic between Azara and the AMA?

Mr. Brandes:

Yeah, we've been really excited to work with the AMA, and this partnership has been developed over a number of years. By starting small and expanding as we've gotten to know each other better, we've really been able to fully express the capabilities and reach that we have here at Azara. In particular, our clients are safety net providers, and that is a target area for the AMA. And so our ability to bring their programs into safety net clinics becomes a really fundamental piece of the relationship we've built.

Anytime you're bringing new technology or new processes into the clinic, you have to be respectful of that doctor-patient interaction. There's only so much time, and nobody wants to learn new workflows or change what they're doing; it has to fit naturally. And really our partnership has grown as we've figured out a way to fit the AMA's MAP™ Hypertension program directly into tools and workflows that our clients were already utilizing and taking advantage of.

Dr. Turck:

And in terms of impact, what value has this collaboration brought to the Azara user community?

Mr. Brandes:

Well, I think first and foremost, one of the things we consider when we select partners is we're trying to make interacting with key people and key organizations in the ecosystem supporting these providers easy. So without Azara, the AMA is still bringing their MAP Hypertension program into federally qualified health centers and other safety net clinics. But bringing it into a tool (Azara DRVS) that the clinic is already using is of high value for our users. It all flows in tools that they're already using. So it's a benefit to the AMA as we bring this into an existing workflow, and it's a big benefit to our clients because they don't have to change what they're doing to take advantage of a great program like the AMA MAP™ AMA Hypertension program.

Dr. Turck:

For those just tuning in, you're listening to *Perspectives with the AMA* on ReachMD. I'm Dr. Charles Turck, and I'm speaking with Mr. Jeff Brandes about Azara Healthcare's work with the American Medical Association.

Now, Mr. Brandes, when it comes to the framework, metrics, and resources of the AMA MAP™ Hypertension Quality Improvement Program, how has it influenced the way Azara thinks about chronic disease management, particularly hypertension control?

Mr. Brandes:

The AMA's MAP™ Hypertension program is just one of many chronic disease programs that we help our clients bring to their patients and deliver in the course of their care. In particular, Azara is focused on making sure our provider clients are prepared for visits when their patients come in and then allow them to monitor and manage those with chronic diseases. So whether it's hypertension, diabetes, or cardiovascular disease, we want to make sure we have all of the key metrics embedded within our workflows for those providers, and the AMA's MAP™ Hypertension program is a key element of that.

Dr. Turck:

And how does this collaboration with the AMA fit into your broader strategy around value-based care?

Mr. Brandes:

While value-based care shifts some of the risk and reward to the provider, it also incents them to be much more proactive in long-term care—so identifying chronic diseases before they're out of control or before they've really settled in and managing them. And in some cases, keeping them under control as the patient ages becomes a critical part of managing the cost of that patient in a value-based care relationship.

And when we look for partners, we're looking for organizations like the American Medical Association that have evidence-based programs that they make available to these providers that then become the standard, and we like to build our tools, our quality metrics, and everything in our workflows to represent evidence-based guidelines and standards from respected bodies like the AMA.

Dr. Turck:

Well, we've certainly covered a lot of ground today, but if we look ahead, before we close, Mr. Brandes, what excites you the most about the future of your relationship with the AMA?

Mr. Brandes:

When I think about our relationship with the AMA and where it goes in the future, today we have 700 safety net providers around the country, and that number keeps growing. And the AMA's MAP™ Hypertension program is one of those programs that we feel really good about bringing to those 700 and growing clinics and expanding how we help them care for their patients and make a difference in their lives.

Dr. Turck:

Well, as those forward-looking comments bring us to the end of today's program, I want to thank my guest, Mr. Jeff Brandes, for joining me to discuss the partnership between the American Medical Association and Azara Healthcare. Mr. Brandes, it was great having you on the program.

Mr. Brandes:

Great to be here. Thank you so much.

Announcer:

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