

Behavior Modeling to Reduce Readmissions

Improving the self-efficacy of patients enables them to better practice self-care after hospital discharge – improving their health outcomes and reducing 30-day readmissions. Wellflix creates multimedia patient education programs that model new, positive behaviors, such as how to adhere to a medication properly.

“We’re not doing talking heads or informational videos,” says **Jonathon A. Winder**, Wellflix CEO. “The single best way to help people change behaviors is to *show* them what to do.” Wellflix has incorporated more than two dozen principles of social cognitive theory (SCT), also called behavioral modeling, which holds that individuals learn new behaviors most effectively by observing others, into videos that explain to patients how they can maximize their recovery.

The first program was for heart failure and began with testing in hospitals in Boston, MA, and Durham, NC. The videos were given to the patient at discharge for use and reinforcement at home and focus on eight behaviors, including tracking weight, lowering salt intake and following a medication plan. After 12 months, Wellflix showed high patient satisfaction and ease of use, along with significant improvements in patient-reported efficacy for the behaviors modeled.

Importantly, the videos are tailored to the patient, with different videos based on their age, sex, race and ethnicity. And each video is short – less than four minutes – another key SCT principle.

Wellflix supplements the videos with other teaching aids, and provides 24/7 online access. The cost for a hospital to implement a program is less than the average \$11,000 price tag for a heart failure readmission, and it is far less than the fine for exceeding readmission standards, says Winder, one of the startup’s founders.

The company began testing its videos in 2015 and has been marketing the program since 2016, successfully adding more institutions. Plans are underway to develop videos for other topics in cardiology. “Digital therapeutics to facilitate the prescribing of patient education is absolutely on its way,” says Winder. “If patients fail to adopt new, healthier ways after discharge, you can bet they will be readmitted sooner rather than later.”

The Innovation Challenge, part of the ACC.18 Future Hub, featured eight finalists selected from 64 applicants. Don’t miss the article in the April issue of *Cardiology* on the winners of the Innovation Challenge: Wellth and PolyVascular. Watch for articles on the other finalists – Corrie Health, HealthPals, Genetesis and ThermoMorph – in future issues of *Cardiology*.



WELLFLIX[®], INC.



Patients are far more likely to adopt behaviors modeled by people who look like themselves.

“The single best way to help people change behaviors is to show them what to do.” **Jonathon A. Winder, Wellflix CEO**