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PUBLISHER Lisa Backet

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Smart Health

How smart are you about your health? Do you know your cholesterol number? What's your blood pressure? How's your glucose level? Not that long ago, these were the questions. Today, those questions and more are being answered by a source other than doctors or other healthcare providers. Fitbits, health patches, remote monitoring devices, contact lenses, as well as other technologies are driving in-home care, at-work-place care, and in-car care. As Robin Robinson discusses in this month's cover story, these personal smart technologies are improving prevention, detection, behavior change, and caregiver support.



The virtual aspect of healthcare is expected to continue to gain acceptability. According to a recent EY report, consumers will increasingly conduct virtual visits with doctors, nurses, and care coaches through cell phones, tablets, and laptops over the next decade. Not only will smart technologies help improve the quality of life for patient-consumers, but the data generated will increasingly be used to help inform drug development, clinical trials, and care delivery.

Designed to facilitate coordinated care across the continuum from healthy living and prevention, to diagnosis and treatment, to home care, this emerging trend represents a two-fold opportunity for pharma companies: creating solutions that enhance patient outcomes and gaining access to de-identified patient-generated data that can guide drug development and business strategies.

As this month's forum details, organizations such as Philips and Validic are collaborating to create connected health solutions that deliver patient information to physicians using health data that are being generated within a clinical setting as well as remotely.

And for patients there is also an opportunity in terms of a financial incentive to become smart health savvy. Recently, UnitedHealthcare and Qualcomm launched a new wellness program that provides members with wearable devices at no additional charge and enables them to earn money by meeting certain goals for the number of daily steps. The collaboration focuses on UnitedHealthcare programs and services that incorporate the latest generation of wearables, medical devices, and home diagnostic tests that use Qualcomm Life's 2net Platform for medical-grade connectivity. The wellness program and related fitness trackers are being offered initially to companies with 101 to 300 employees with a fully insured health plan. Unlike other wearable devices that simply track the total number of steps, the UnitedHealthcare Motion devices tabulate the total number, frequency, and intensity of the steps taken, providing a more accurate and comprehensive summary of the user's daily activity. Employees can earn Health Reimbursement Account credits that can total up to \$1,460 per year, while employers can obtain premium savings based on program participants' combined results.

Hey, have you hit your 10,000 steps today?

Taren Grom
Editor

Their word...



DENISE MYSHKO
Managing Editor

Researchers are hopeful that a successful HIV vaccine is a real possibility in the foreseeable future.



ROBIN ROBINSON
Senior Editor

As the role of the MSL grows in significance, training becomes crucial.



KIM RIBBINK
Features Editor

India is a fast-growing and dynamic market with many opportunities for pharmaceutical companies – both local and multinational.

June 2016

- ▶ The Changing Clinical Landscape
- ▶ 2016 DIA Preview
- ▶ Data and Analytics — Commercial Strategies
- ▶ Mobile Advertising
- ▶ CNS: Clinical Research Organizations
- ▶ Market Focus: China
- ▶ Showcase: Clinical Trial Solutions