

202020

VISION

Contributed by



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What we know for sure is that everything that can be invented has not been invented.

What we also know is that health is a human business and so 202020 VISION is driven as much from a human, biopsychosocial perspective as it is from a technological perspective. As William Osler, a great 19th century expert in internal medicine, noted: "The good physician treats the disease, but the great physician treats the patient who has the disease."

For us, biopsychosocial medicine is important when we look to the future because it looks at the interaction of our biological processes with our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, behaviors, and their social context. It is common sense and an empirical fact that social and psychological factors affect health; yet it is by no means universally accepted.

In our view, technology, particularly that which has driven social media, already has had a profound impact on the psychosocial context of health and healthcare. And this will continue at an accelerating pace up to and beyond 2020.

Interventions Across 8 Health Engagement Zones

202020 VISION maps a psychosocial context into 8 "zones" of health engagement and presents 20 ideas that we believe will be realized by 2020, as they could relate to these zones. We have pursued this approach to remind us all that a focus on technology alone is naïve.

We believe that the tipping point of future progress will be the widespread acceptance and adoption of cloud-based electronic health histories (EHH), also commonly referred to as electronic health records (EHR) or electronic medical records (EMR), accessed at any time, any place, anywhere, through personal multi-functional devices (PMFDs), the smart phones of 2020. This for us is a must, it is the "digital glue" that will allow technological ad-

vances to interact with our bodies and our lifestyles, which of course change and evolve throughout our lives.

By 2020, "preventive health" (zone A) will have become big business for industries that were once on the fringes. Genetic profiling will have gained widespread acceptance, helped by health insurer incentives to prevent disease progression. There will be further incentives to participate in screening for conditions that have been identified as risks. All of this will be easier and much of it carried out on our PMFDs.

Predicting the future is not an easy business: "Everything that can be invented has been invented."

— Charles H. Duell,
US Patent Office, 1899

Crucial to public acceptance of these advances will be highly targeted communication campaigns demonstrating the ease of testing/screening and comparing and contrasting the benefits of early, preclinical intervention versus the impact of delayed treatment.

Leading companies within the food industry will have embraced the regulatory challenges associated with evidence-based preventive health and we envisage partnerships and alliances with the pharmaceutical industry. Some indulgences in 2020 are likely to have both psychological and physiological benefits.

When it comes to "perceiving & interpreting symptoms" (zone B) and "responding to symptoms" (zone C), technology will provide enhanced personal monitoring of our bodies

at a pre-symptomatic level via miniature implants that will feed this information to our cloud-based electronic health histories. Diagnostic algorithms will then help us interpret our symptoms and help guide our responses.

Our subjective, emotional representations will be enhanced by data collected from our biological processes, enabling some decisions to be automatically made for us. "Self care" (zone D) will take on a whole new dimension.

Such data will be power. Today's online patient groups will become increasingly influential patient cooperatives as their access to automatic, anonymized members' data is sought after.

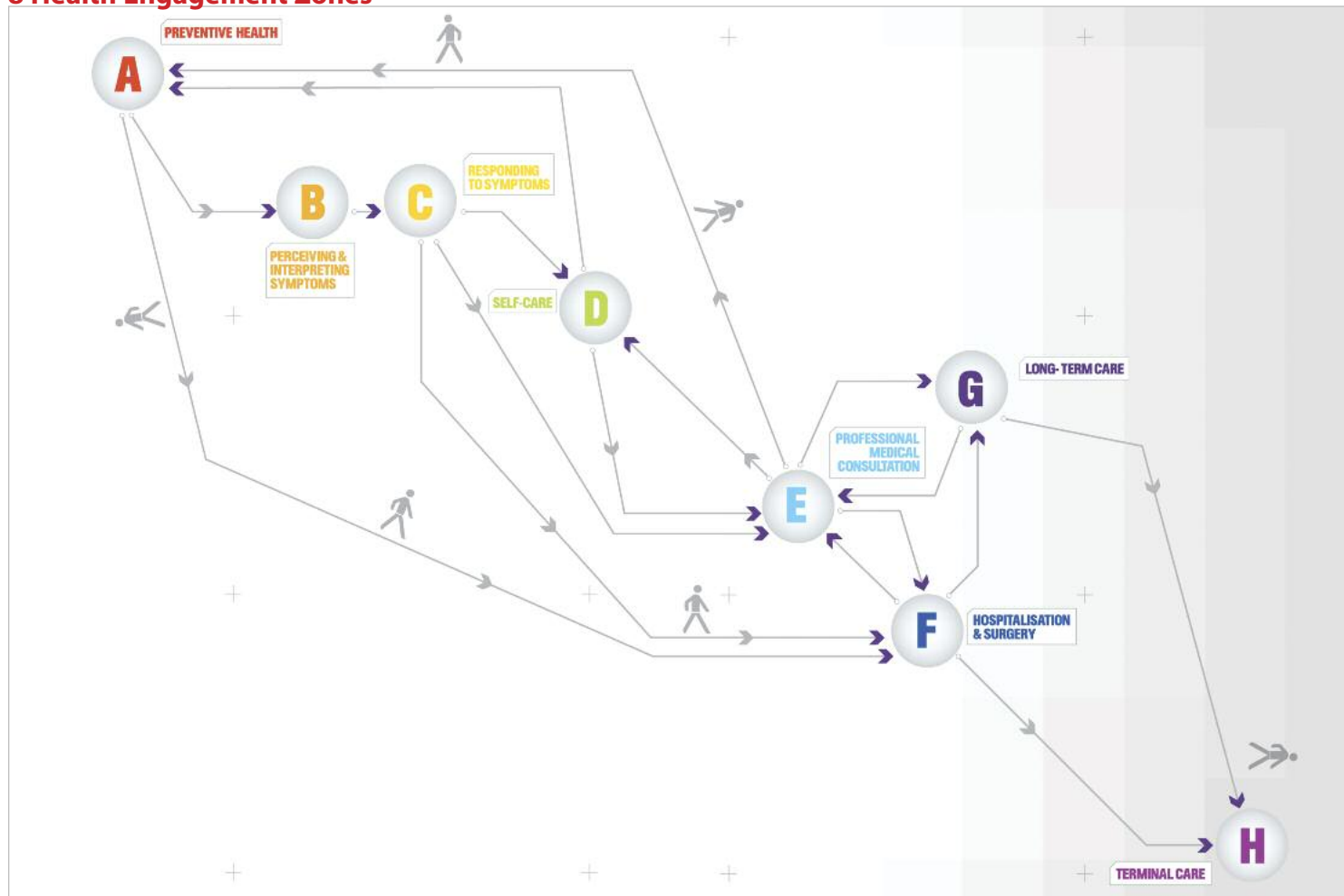
The "professional consultation" (zone E) will have been transformed in part through virtual interactions. Doctors' "visits" will be more focused and patients' expectations better managed. Both virtual and real interactions will be enhanced by tailored outputs, many of which will include videographic simulations that model an individual's future health, depicting the consequences of decisions and behaviors.

When engaging with "hospitalization & surgery" (zone F), we will start to see a hi-tech, hi-touch polarization of health provision. Human judgment and involvement in some procedures will be verging on the obsolete with advances in imaging and robotics. This will free up resources for a greater emphasis on hi-touch nursing care

We predict global health providers will have partnered with leading brands in the hospitality business to create a substantial health tourism industry that leverages the benefits of psychological nourishment on recovery. We will also witness a whole new era in medicine: advances in tissue and organ re-



8 Health Engagement Zones



generation for both therapeutic and cosmetic purposes.

“Long-term care” (zone G) will become increasingly important as we continue to live longer, afflicted by chronic disease. We will, however, see a transformation in how we engage in this care. Assisted by genetic profiling and electronic health histories, we will see personalized polypharmacy, with individually tailored dosing. And very many of our medicines will transmit data to confirm when they have been taken and how they are working with the body. A number of medicines will be replaced by gene therapy.

And finally, within “terminal care” (zone H), we will see the use of mind-reading technology that is already available, applied to help people better realize their very final wishes.

Communication is Key

If we are to effect the true potential that “technology promises health,” we need to remind ourselves that we are not machines but idiosyncratic human beings, with hopes and fears, stimulated and shaped by the media, family and friends.

Public and individual patient communication will be the key to unlocking the benefits of new technologies. To achieve this, we must all keep in mind:

- Technology in itself is not a panacea; it needs to be adopted and incorporated into our everyday behavior.
- Technology will give us tools to do a lot more, but the information that these tools will gather must be communicated and interpreted effectively to change behavior.
- Information is ineffective if we don't understand it in the context of our everyday lives, and information overload will have to be managed. To cut through the “clutter”, information will increasingly need to be communicated through storytelling and information visualization (infographics), whereby it is portrayed in ways that tell visual stories. The provision of information/knowledge/understanding will become an art and a science.
- New technologies to map and track individuals' attitudes and behavior will allow us to create the right message with the right tone in the right place at the right time.
- General health prevention messaging, which we often switch-off to today, will speak

to us as individuals, tailored to the specific lives we lead.

- Relative risk will need to be considered. Risk will need to be put into perspective and communicated responsibly to avoid the unnecessary fear that is a barrier to health improvement. Highly targeted, persistent, positive messaging will be needed to help overcome fear and embarrassment.
- Although health is a serious matter, we don't always have to take ourselves seriously when it comes to health communication. Gaming, for example, is already a proven, highly valuable communication tool that effects behavioral change as well. **PV**

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