

## Q&A with Pamela W. McNamara, CEO and President of Health Helm, Inc. bring to market their Trusted Patient Coach™ a Mobile Patient Reported Outcome Platform delivering Actionable Data and Analytics for Clinicians and Patients



**Pamela W. McNamara**  
Chief Executive Officer & President

Health Helm, Inc.

Interview conducted by:  
**Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor**  
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**CEOCFO:** *Ms. McNamara, what is the concept behind Health Helm?*

**Ms. McNamara:** Our Trusted Patient Coach™ is a mobile patient reported outcome (PRO) platform to enable patients and their clinical team to stay in touch after procedures such as surgery, and between doctor's visits. This allows them to track, for example, their medication, their clinical status, their physiologic data, to keep them on-track with their care plans. The aim is to achieve better outcomes as well as save costs such as unnecessary hospital admissions or emergency room visits.

**CEOCFO:** *How common is usage today?*

**Ms. McNamara:** FDA emphasis on patient reported outcomes has been growing over the last fifteen years. My team and I led the growth of the most successful patient reported mobile platform for clinical trials in use today. I have been involved in mobile health the last fifteen years, and over that timeframe patients' desires to use their mobile devices for healthcare have grown. This is true for all age groups, particularly people over age sixty-five, who want to stay in touch with their clinical teams and to keep track of their own situation. This has grown enormously. We have demonstrated with clinical evidence and through clinical studies that upwards of 75% to 80% of patients regularly comply with this kind of program because they see the benefits.

**CEOCFO:** *Do the medical professionals comply as much and do they pay attention like they should, in general?*

**Ms. McNamara:** Yes, they do, because they see the benefits of identifying early potential complications or smoldering problems before they turn into significant health issues which could lead to significant costs like hospital readmission. Achieving strong compliance also means the platform needs to fit with the clinician's workflow. We focus a lot on how to make the platform easy to use by both the patient and the clinical team. The forces working against that as you probably know are the demands on clinicians to use a wide variety of IT systems, notably electronic medical record (EMR) systems and others which can take a lot of their time. Therefore, we have been focused on the twin goals of demonstrating the value to clinicians and making it easy, fast and reliable to use so that it is not an added burden.

**CEOCFO:** *I have been told that the reason some of the systems are so complicated has to do with the reimbursement and the billing code. Is that not a factor? How are you able to make it easy?*

**Ms. McNamara:** What we have built into our platform is a very simple-to-use, exception-based, system that pops up alerts when a patient is getting off track or is not compliant, so the clinician can manage those exceptions and can do it quickly. In less than a minute, the clinician is able to dive in, see what is going on, login to our software system, and make a proper acknowledgement that's acceptable to other clinicians as well as to payers. For example, was an unnecessary doctor's office visit or emergency department visit prevented? We aim for the minimum number of steps and clicks, and

we track time on task. If the clinician wants to dig more deeply to see what is going on they also can easily view historical trends with a minimal number of clicks. We worked with leading human factors engineers at Tufts University to design this with both clinicians and patients in mind, with a lot of work back and forth to make sure it's simple and reliable. As you and I both know, having reliable high-integrity data is also critical to adoption by clinicians as well as by patients who want to monitor their own data trends around meeting a goal like improving weight, for example. Those are the keys we focus on: the value, simplicity, and integrity of data.

**CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example of what has changed over time for Health Helm?***

**Ms. McNamara:** We keep drilling down into workflow and what information in our platform is most useful to the patients, and to the clinicians: what they want to see. For example, we continue to simplify the exception-based dashboard and reporting data, and what to integrate and share with other medical reporting systems if a hospital system or provider so chooses. Our human factors engineering team keeps homing in on the most useful data. Over time, clinicians are learning what to ask patients to report and how to ask them to report it. For example, anti-coagulants are one of the medication classes that are typically tracked after surgery, and our clinicians found that patients were not compliant in taking or reporting aspirin as their anti-coagulant. Our tool enabled them to dig deeper into what was going on and found that many patients did not realize that aspirin was being prescribed as an important anti-coagulant. Many patients thought of aspirin as only an over the counter pain medication. So changes were made in patient education and notifications: as a result of that, patient compliance in reporting increased by 15% to 20%. So clinicians are using our platform as a patient reporting tool to better understand what to ask patients, how to ask and track it, and how to modify the care plan as a result of what the patients report themselves. This type of learning and adaptation has been a significant change in clinical practices that we've seen in the last 2 to 3 years.

**“We are focusing on the readmissions challenge where providers are trying to manage and prevent unnecessary readmissions and emergency department visits because that is a current priority for providers and health systems. The clinical benefit and the cost savings are significant... Having reliable high-integrity data is also critical to adoption by clinicians as well as by patients who want to monitor their own data trends around meeting a goal like improving weight, for example. Those are the keys we focus on: the value, simplicity, and integrity of data.”- Pamela W. McNamara**

**CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to new clients and stand out in a field that is very crowded?***

**Ms. McNamara:** We are a business-to-business model, Software as a Service, or SaaS platform. We have been focusing on specialties where there is a clear financial impact. We all know the pressures that the providers are under these days with declining reimbursements. We are focusing on the readmissions challenge where providers are trying to manage and prevent unnecessary readmissions and emergency department visits because that is a current priority for providers and health systems. The clinical benefit and the cost savings are significant. The other way we stand out is through very high user satisfaction. Patients often ask to use the platform again for another procedure or surgery. By focusing on clinical outcomes, financial benefits, and patient satisfaction, as well as by providing metrics in each of those areas, we demonstrate results. Providers then express interest in using the platform in other specialties – including both post-acute and chronic conditions.

**CEOCFO: *What is next for Health Helm?***

**Ms. McNamara:** We are seeking more strategic partnerships with more health systems and providers in the US: the US market is very ripe for this impact. We are demonstrating our leadership in patient reported outcomes and the value of that data to reduce cost, improve outcomes, demonstrate patient satisfaction and patient retention. Our data and analytics are key. Our objective is for Trusted Patient Coach to be a leader delivering high integrity, useful, actionable patient reported outcome data and analytics for clinicians and patients. That is the big opportunity that we are squarely focused on.

