Digital Asthma Tool Creates a New Standard in Chronic Disease Management

Nemours Children's Health System today announced the launch of a new digital tool designed to help clinicians and families of children with asthma monitor their health remotely, adhere to care plans, and communicate more effectively between visits. The Nemours App for Asthma is the first product to be released by Nemours's Center for Health Delivery Innovation as part of a new digital health strategy that complements the health system's commitment to treating the whole child through prevention, population health, and clinical care. The announcement was made at the U.S. News Healthcare of Tomorrow conference in Washington, D.C.

"This app is a model for Nemours, demonstrating how digital health allows us to meet families wherever they are and fulfill our commitment to the medical home model," said Gina Altieri, CPA, Senior Vice President and Chief of Strategy Integration at Nemours Children's Health System. "Our goal is to better engage with families, understand what is happening between visits, help families manage chronic conditions, and improve outcomes of care."

The app looks to address the most challenging aspects of treating chronic conditions — and asthma in particular — by offering access, anytime or anywhere, to encourage families to participate in care whenever it is necessary, giving both families and physicians more information and support to design and comply with care plans, thereby improving care and reducing hospital readmissions.

The asthma app supports the use of physician ordered home-monitoring tools, such as a breath-flow monitor and a digitally connected stethoscope, provides video instructions for inhaler use, allows families to keep a real-time digital journal of symptoms, and enables better communication for telehealth visits with asthma specialists.

Nemours will be monitoring the care of families using the app to determine how the digital tool helps patients manage and control their condition, compared with traditional care.

To develop the app, Nemours designed a system that brings together data from the electronic medical record, the KidsHealth patient education website, and its CareConnect telehealth service. The coordination of technology requires that each component is interoperable within one system to enable the file-sharing, journaling, and use of clinical tools. Clinicians and families were integral to the design and development of the tool, participating through advisory boards and testing.

Nemours built on its strong foundation for digital health, from nearly 20 years of using electronic medical records, by forming the Center for Health Delivery Innovation in 2016. The Nemours App for Asthma will be the first of several disease-specific tools designed to help patients and families better manage their chronic conditions by integrating the patient and clinician experience into one platform. The tool is now being piloted in the clinical setting and is scheduled to be released for use in iPhones through the Apple store in early 2018.

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system that owns and operates the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in six states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect.

Established as The Nemours Foundation through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.

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