



Dossia Health Management System Reduces Healthcare Costs and Improves Healthcare Quality

By Mike Critelli



Dossia, unlike portals created by health plans and provider systems, is structured solely to benefit the consumers. It has no financial incentive to lock the consumers into a particular provider system, health plan, pharmacy, test lab, or applications provider. It is designed to accept new applications over time, based on consumers' preferences and to offer multiple options to consumers if health plan sponsors allow it to do so.

The only goal of Dossia is to lock consumers into a system that increases their engagement with their health and wellbeing, and increases their ability to perform and enjoy life activities that matter to them. This is the only way our country will "bend the cost curve." We have to reorient our population toward managing and improving their health, as opposed to being swayed to engage in unhealthy activities and relying on the healthcare system to fix the problem their unhealthy activities create for them.

There are two big challenges our society will have to overcome if we are to redirect a significant portion of our society's assets and resources, including human resources, toward more productive uses that enhance our competitiveness and security:

We have to associate optimal health with values that matter more to individuals and groups in the short term, such as fun, social acceptance, and achievement, and to disconnect unhealthy activities from those same values. Health-promoting activities should not have to fight with unhealthy activities as the optimal way to go for a consumer. Fortunately, as I noted at the beginning of this paper, we have models of success from population health initiatives:

- Smoking is no longer associated with being "cool" or "adult" in our population, because of a major culture change process. It's even currently being debated as to whether movies with smoking should automatically receive an R rating (<http://tinyurl.com/7cztb6e>);
- Driving while intoxicated is no longer socially acceptable. In fact, being obnoxiously intoxicated is no longer socially acceptable;
- Driving without wearing seat helmets or riding bicycles or motorcycles without helmets is no longer socially acceptable; and
- We are at the beginning stages of reducing unnecessary violence in competitive sports like football, ice hockey, and soccer because we have realized that the cumulative effects of that violence leads to dementia and premature death. USA Hockey and Hockey Canada are seriously considering rules that would effectively end fighting in nonprofessional leagues as soon as next season (<http://tinyurl.com/7kfe4xm>).

We know we can reverse longstanding population health trends if the critical mass of people decide we need to do so. We have to address overeating and the lack of exercise without humiliating people who cannot control their weight and become victims of diseases caused by obesity.

The more difficult challenge is to alter the economic structures and markets that cause major sectors of our society to make huge profits and to make their livelihoods from unhealthy activities or from the healthcare solutions that manage or cure the diseases, illnesses and injuries that result from these unhealthy activities.

It is exceptionally difficult to change our agricultural subsidy systems, the convenience created by packaged foods with either no nutrition or unhealthy nutritional elements, the profit addiction caused by consumer addiction to sugary foods, and the linkage between profitable restaurants, bars and entertainment venues built around serving unhealthy foods and beverages.



It is even more difficult to redesign communities to create more opportunities for individuals to exercise in the normal course of their daily activity, and to redesign work environments to reduce the amount of time individuals spend sitting down, instead of moving around.

We also have to think about the political challenges of shrinking or closing down a major employer, such as a hospital, that exists to “cure” or “treat” unhealthy people, as opposed to preventing or reversing the conditions that make them unhealthy.

Dossia cannot solve these major economic and political structural problems. What it can and must do is to point consumers, one at a time, toward what a healthy life can mean for people. It can be an integral part of a long-term marketing and communications effort to get individuals to change their daily habits for the better and to mobilize them to demand environmental conditions that are healthier for them and their loved ones.

Dossia can be a catalyst for societal health and wellbeing that reminds individuals that they can do better and deserve the right to do better. It can make them smarter and more aware of what is getting in the way of their wellbeing. It can also point them in the direction of products and services that will work in favor of their health.

Over time, it will also point vendors of foods, beverages, healthcare services, exercise programs, clothing and other products consumers use in their daily lives toward a big, new market for health-promoting solutions. It will do so because it will prime the consumers to be receptive to those solutions.

I have no doubt that we can reverse the destructive health trends in our country. Dossia's goal is to make that process happen faster, more systematically, and more purposefully, and to be part of an orchestrated change management process that works for everyone's benefit.





Dossia - Empowering individuals to change health and healthcare

Dossia is an employer-led organization dedicated to improving health and healthcare in America by empowering individuals to make good health decisions and become more discerning healthcare consumers. Backed by some of the largest, most respected brands in the world - Applied Materials, AT&T, BP America, Inc., Cardinal Health, Intel, Pitney Bowes, sanofi-aventis, Vanguard Health Systems, NantWorks and Wal-Mart - Dossia's founding member companies have united under the common vision of changing healthcare.

The Dossia Health Management System makes individuals' aggregated health data actionable with customized applications brought together on a single intelligent platform to deliver personalized, data-driven solutions that enable users to get more value from healthcare spending, better manage chronic conditions and pursue a healthier lifestyle. Dossia integrates game and social dynamics, incentives and targeted messaging to foster sustained engagement and health behavior change, thereby offering long-term value to employers as well as their employees and families. Far too often employers overspend on health benefits for which they realize little value. The Dossia Health Management System is the solution for innovative employers that aim to rationalize their health benefits spending while engaging their employees as true partners in achieving high value healthcare.

For more information, visit www.dossia.org.

