Population Health Management

The shift in healthcare brings Population Health Management (PHM) into the forefront of patient care. Population Health is not public health in the sense the name may imply rather it is keeping the

Figure 1 http://www.healthcare-informatics.com/article/health-system-population-health-personal

patient population as healthy as possible to benefit the whole. As defined by the American Journal of Public Health, population health is "health outcomes of a group of individuals and the distribution of such outcomes within the group" (Kindig, DA, Stoddard. 2003, 366-369).

Data analytics is more important than ever to ensure successful PHM by trending to identify the population's ill health in order to effectively manage reduction in expensive tests, procedures and hospital visits. Proactive preventative care and managing chronic patient care needs across the continuum requires use of automated data availability.
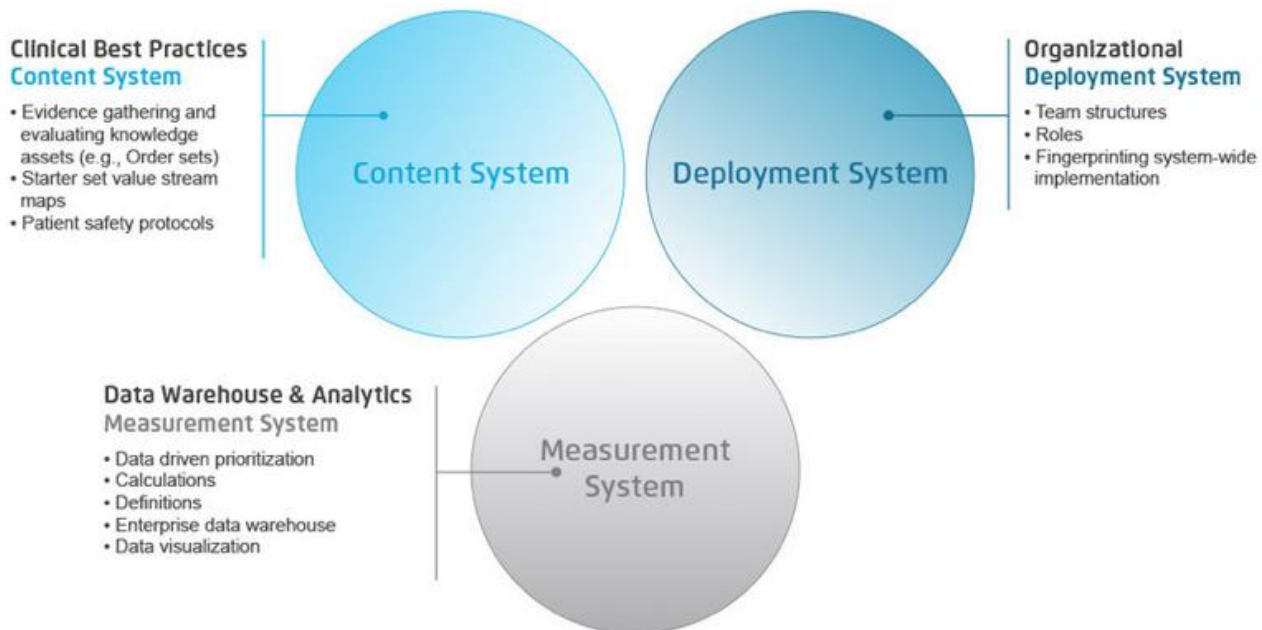
Successful PHM Components

Figure 2 https://www.healthcatalyst.com/population-health/

Enterprise Data Warehouse and Analytics Measurement System

You need data across the entire continuum of care in order to manage patient populations. You need a systematic way to understand and evaluate the important opportunities and allocate resources to work on those key processes to focus on quality of care improvement, cost reduction, revenue enhancement or patient injury prevention.

Improving Care across the Continuum
- Identify how the care continuum functions and flows throughout the system
- Understand the correct use of evidence-based guidelines, which are the most critical items to measure in determining optimal care delivery

A Systematic, Evidence-Based Content System

Population health initiatives need to understand what evidence and expert consensus exist about care best practices and waste reduction opportunities. A standardized way of integrating evidence into care delivery that takes weeks, not years.   The three important areas of waste reduction opportunities that should be built into any application; that simultaneously improve the quality of care and help reach the needed value-based cost objectives:
- Ordering waste
- Workflow and operational waste
- Patient injury waste

An Organizational Deployment System

PHM requires a systemic and sustained effort across a system to win and maintain hard-fought gains over a series of one-time projects. Moving beyond effective collection and use prioritized data to guide improvement, satisfaction, and cost reduction efforts, leaders must

organize permanent teams which span facilities, traditional departments, and acute/ambulatory boundaries, and integrate technical and clinical personnel across the care continuum in order to sustain their gains.

Tips for Getting Started in Population Health

Clarifying goals and developing a roadmap

- Conduct a preparedness assessment: survey available IT and staffing resources, current data assets and quality, and the key features of the patient community.
- Develop a series of benchmarks to measure progress towards established goals in order to stay on track and provide staff members with a clear sense of accomplishment.

Infrastructure investments and data analytics

- Be prepared for an investment in IT
- Keep interoperability in mind when choosing IT solutions

Engaging staff members

- Retool staff via formalized education
- Consider Scorecards to appeal to the natural competitiveness and benchmarks to pin performance to financial bonuses

Engaging patients

- Better lifelong health and fewer hospitalizations may not be enough. Consider financial incentives

Ensure care coordination and follow-up

- Maintain medication adherence at home, and monitoring chronic conditions with the help of mobile tools
- Add post-encounter follow-up

Additional Information

1. http://pcmh.ahrq.gov/citation/population-health-management-framework-support-medical-home
2. http://www.ihi.org/Topics/TripleAim/Pages/default.aspx
3. http://www.pharmacytimes.com/publications/health-system-edition/2015/March2015/Population-Health-Management
4. https://www.healthcatalyst.com/2015-beyond-6-predicitions-healthcare-population-health