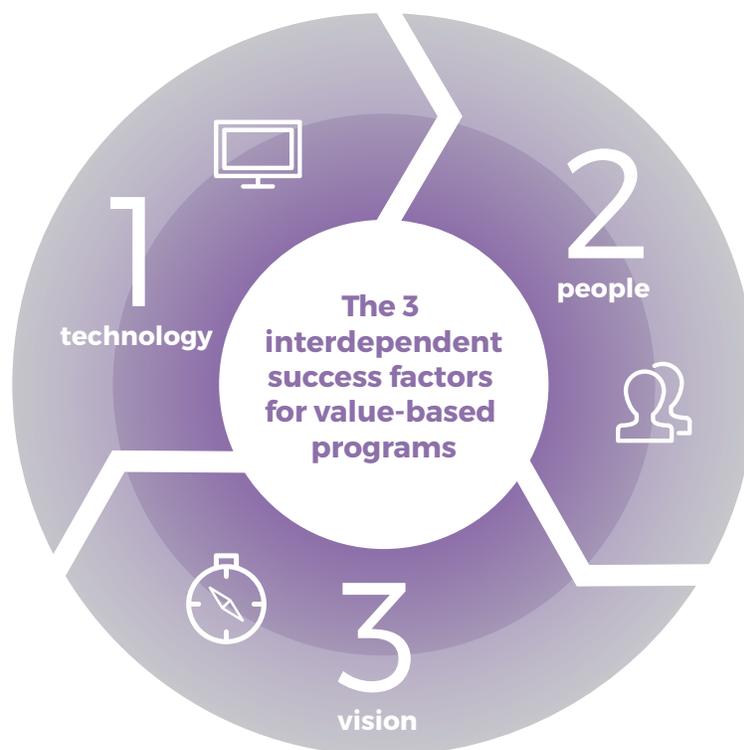




## 3 Key Attributes of Every Successful Value-Focused Oncology Practice

Oncology practices, especially providers participating in value-based reimbursement programs from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) like the Oncology Care Model (OCM), are under pressure to measure and improve performance. Three interdependent key factors—technological capabilities, people resources, and vision—are the shared characteristics of OCM practices best able to maximize program benefits and improve the patient experience.



## Introduction

For years, momentum has been steadily building for health care providers to move away from fee-for-service models and maintain high-quality care while reducing costs by embracing value-based care. In 2013, value-based transformation was heralded as [“The Strategy That Will Fix Health Care”](#), and with the passage of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) in 2015, the discussion around how practices must transition to value-based care has gained even more relevance as practices may earn increased incentives—or face penalties—as a result of their performance against quality measures.

The legislation outlined in MACRA redefines value programs for providers participating in Medicare Part B. As part of the Quality Payment Program, providers must choose one of two tracks—either the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), or an Alternative Payment Model (APM). The data collection required by both MIPS and APMs is extensive, and with 2017 as the first performance period already in progress, many practices are scrambling to assemble staffing and technical resources in time to meet the ambitious CMS reporting deadlines. Specifically, oncology practices face numerous challenges collecting, calculating, and reporting the nuanced clinical data inherent in treating cancer.

Each oncology practice is different. These shared attributes are intentionally broad enough to adapt for most departments or practices while providing an overall, high-level framework that will aid in the transition to value-based care.

### 1. Leverage Technology For Data Insights

Utilizing data to improve the quality of care is at the heart of value-based programs like OCM. Unfortunately, simply having data stored in an EMR or data warehouse won't provide the type of insight needed to understand where improvement is warranted, and where program benefits can be maximized. In order to be effective in a value-based practice, data must be accurate, actionable, and timely.

#### **Accurate**

It's often said that bad data is worse than no data at all. With practices using multiple data systems that offer limited interoperability, the incidence of inaccurate data can occur without careful systems management. A good manager of informatics should be the point person in charge of managing where data is mapped, gauging its completeness, and working with vendors to ensure everything runs smoothly in the data collection and reporting process required by many value-based programs.

### **Actionable**

Data on its own does not provide insight. Data analytics that sit on top of EMR/EHR systems and infrastructure already in place are an effective way to make clinical data meaningful to all stakeholders in the practice. The [best solutions](#) will extract structured and unstructured data to provide direct insight into real-time performance against quality measures used in value payment programs like OCM.

### **Timely**

In a program like OCM where success is measured by time-sensitive episodes of patient care, having access to up-to-date clinical data is crucial for timely remediation and optimal performance will aid in the transition to value-based care.

By carefully tracking high-risk patients, targeting unnecessary costs and leveraging health IT, UnityPoint has trimmed unnecessary spending and improved quality in key areas, officials said. Since its founding in 2012, it has received approximately \$24 million in shared savings and quality incentives through value-based agreements.

In order to assess patients' risk profiles, the organization overlays data from claims and health records. The combination offers a "rich picture of what's going on in the population," said Aric Sharp, vice president of accountable care for UnityPoint.

Source: <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20170204/MAGAZINE/302049983>



## **2. Develop And Recruit The Right People**

The most successful practices will strategically hire and train staff around high-impact activities that support value-based care initiatives, including data and informatics management, care coordination roles, and visionary leadership. Strategic thought should be given to which types of roles need to be developed or recruited into the institution in order to understand how to quantify the patient experience and outcomes at the heart of value-based programs like OCM.

## Visionary Leadership In The C-suite

In this evolution towards value-based care, a number of [new executive roles and responsibilities](#) have gained popularity in recent years to meet this need. Two notable titles among these include:



### Chief Data Analytics Officer

Responsible for taking disparate analytics from multiple systems to make that data meaningful and accessible for clinicians and administrators.



### Chief Innovation Officer

Requires an understanding of the business as well as the patient experience, this is a key strategic role that provides strong leadership in the transition to value-based care models.



## 3. Empower Visionary Leadership

*“The leading providers are taking an “all in” innovative approach as they do the hard work of developing new organizational competencies and nurturing cultural change from within. Their new high-value models will give them a clear advantage over institutions that fail to act strategically now.”*

— Thomas H. Lee, MD, MSc & Laura S. Kaiser  
Press Ganey Associates, Inc.  
Intermountain Healthcare

Source: <http://catalyst.nejm.org/turning-value-based-health-care-into-a-real-business-model/>

Visionary leadership requires a combination of innovative thinking, grit, and sheer will to drive processes and people toward value-based principles. Luckily, that kind of leadership can either be developed from within or brought in from the outside. The vision of value-based care should act as the North Star for the technological improvements and hiring strategy described earlier. Great case studies of high-level strategy and leadership in practice can be found in this [New England Journal of Medicine](#) article, this [2014 ACCC report on oncology leadership](#), and this spotlight of [Regional Cancer Care Associates](#).

## Participants In A 2014 Accc Oncology Leadership Survey Agreed That:

- Good clinicians do not necessarily make good leaders
- Cancer program leaders do not have to be physicians
- A leader's job should not be administrative, but visionary and strategic
- Effective leaders nurture and respect all employees and recognize their role in problem solving and quality cancer care delivery
- In integrated systems, leadership must cross service lines and break down silos while recognizing that oncology has to work within a larger system with competing priorities
- Oncology leaders must address cost, value, quality, and patient satisfaction in all decisions
- The patient must be at the center of all decisions.

Source: Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) [Oncology Leadership report](#), 2014



*"Practice transformation, the move toward value, and providing patients with high-quality, cost-effective care—those are tenets we embrace and eventually we knew that's where the market was going."*

— Mike Ruiz de Somocurcio,  
VP of payer strategy and collaboration,  
Regional Cancer Care Associates

## Conclusion

There's a reason why 'value-based' is often mentioned in the same breath as 'patient-centered'. Many [industry leaders believe](#) a focus on value-based care leads to better quality care while reducing the overall cost of care for the population served. By developing the three key attributes of successful value-based oncology practices—leveraging technology for data insight, recruiting the right people, and empowering visionary leadership—oncology practices will be well prepared to make the transition to value-based care in 2017 and beyond.

## Learn More About Cota OCM™



Cota OCM™ offers providers accessible, timely, and actionable insights from their clinical data. By extracting structured and unstructured data from the EHR and visualizing it in a web-based interface, Cota helps practices manage real-world evidence and deliver precision medicine to improve patient lives and reduce the cost of care.

**Learn more about how Cota is leading the movement in value-based care at [cotahealthcare.com](http://cotahealthcare.com)**