Integrating AI into Your Digital Health Strategy

A GUIDE FOR HEALTH PLANS

icario™

The digital health landscape continues to evolve, and artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most transformative forces driving this change.

AI uses data to create personalized experiences that appeal to members' behaviors, needs, and wants. Because AI products and tools adapt in real-time, they create stronger, more meaningful experiences as the system learns. With continuous, nearly immediate feedback mechanisms, each member's needs are increasingly understood, boosting engagement, driving loyalty, and building long-lasting connections that continue to deepen over time.

AI's Potential for Health Plans

AI has enormous potential for health plans when building digital health strategies. There are many reasons for this, but first and foremost, plans already have vast amounts of data in terms of member health history, preferences, and interactions. AI's unique ability to uncover patterns and insights based on previous interactions with members means the system can learn much more rapidly. Combined with rich historic data, this creates unlimited opportunities to create personalized communication and more proactive health interventions. In such a data-rich environment, AI's already enormous capabilities are amplified to create increasingly better health experiences even more rapidly.[1]

Yet, to reach its full potential, AI must be integrated using the right strategies focused on optimizing operational efficiency and enhancing member experiences. In this paper, the experts at Icario explain how health plans can leverage AI to significantly improve member outreach, increase plan engagement, and boost health outcomes. In addition, we'll offer case study examples of how AI is already improving the performance of member engagement programs for Icario's health plan partners.

AI's Role in Creating Personalized Member Experiences

To understand how AI can build increasingly more personalized member experiences, it's crucial to discuss the role of machine learning (ML). ML algorithms analyze vast amounts of health plan data to identify common patterns when it comes to member behaviors, preferences, demographics, and other points. From there, AI can segment members based on health risks, engagement levels, and other behavioral aspects. A deep understanding of patterns and strong segmentation enables the system to target outreach more effectively, create personalized care suggestions, and customize communications based on member preferences. By continuously learning from member interactions, AI can adapt and improve personalization strategies over time.

AI's ability to segment member populations into actionable groups based on behavior and engagement preferences allows health plans to continuously move members toward better health while minimizing member abrasion.

Members can receive personalized outreach, with AI algorithms dynamically adjusting based on their engagement history and health data. This also helps identify critical areas for improvement where gaps in care or social risk factors may affect individual and population health outcomes.

IN THE REAL WORLD

Improving Member Action Plans

Icario has demonstrated how AI-driven programs can help build more deeply customized member action plans by analyzing data points regarding member health histories, eligibility files, Health Risk Assessment (HRA) responses, and behavioral patterns. Based on previous behavioral data, our platform creates timely and personalized communications through a mix of digital communication channels carefully chosen to meet individual member preferences. As a result, meaningful information about supplemental benefits, services, and care options is delivered in a personalized, impactful manner that strengthens the connection between member and plan.

AI-driven customization goes beyond simple data aggregation, tapping into each member's unique health journey to drive engagement. By leveraging behavioral insights and eligibility data, Icario's platform can predict when a member might be most receptive to a specific message, whether related to preventive screenings or chronic condition management.

Boosting Operational Efficiency with AI

AI introduces significant operational efficiencies by automating processes and enhances outcomes cost-effectively.[2] By streamlining and scaling health outreach initiatives, AI can empower plans to run engagement campaigns concurrently, targeting different member segments based on their specific health profiles, needs, or risk factors. By coordinating campaign timing, messaging, and personalization to avoid overlap, AI-integrated systems can maximize reach in an informed, smart way while decreasing administrative burden.

As they learn, AI algorithms can track member engagement in real time to adjust touchpoint frequency and fine-tune messaging, reducing the chance of overwhelming members. Relevant messages are delivered in a timely, cleverly orchestrated fashion designed to reduce member abrasion and continuously improve health engagement.

As the system learns and observes members' activity in real-time, plans can gauge the effectiveness of interventions individually and across the entire member segment. Predictive analytics can then identify the highest-value campaign activities to prioritize interventions and maximize the impact of each campaign and program. Efficiency is improved not only administratively but within each campaign component itself, from the channel mix to messaging design to the timing of each member touchpoint. This helps maximize each program's impact now and in the future.

IN THE REAL WORLD

Improving Medicare Programs

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) estimates that individuals with diabetes incur healthcare costs over twice as high as those without diabetes.[3] For health plans, this translates into direct costs, like medical and pharmaceutical expenses, and indirect costs, including loss of productivity.

Effectively managing diabetes-related costs involves preventive care and early intervention to reduce complications, which can significantly mitigate financial impact. Within Medicare programs, AI-powered predictive analytics have proven effective in identifying members at high risk for diabetes. Proactive engagement helps manage member health more effectively, reducing the likelihood of costly hospitalizations and fostering stronger relationships between members and healthcare providers.

By automating routine processes and using AI to continuously improve engagement metrics, AI's predictive analytics results in significant cost savings for Medicare programs, greater efficiency, and improved health outcomes for members.

Transforming Decision-Making with AI

AI's greatest strength lies in its ability to process and analyze vast amounts of data at unprecedented speeds and at scale. As a result, health plans can make more informed decisions faster and with a higher degree of accuracy without additional administrative burden. AI's ability to rapidly analyze current and historical data means plans make it easier to identify patterns and predict future outcomes.[4] This information helps plans make more informed decisions and create more efficient decision-making processes to incorporate continuous feedback. AI also supports personalized, data-informed strategies by assessing individual and population-level health trends.

Health plans can proactively address potential health risks through predictive analytics, improving outcomes and lowering costs. As in our diabetes example, AI can pinpoint high-risk members who may require interventions, enabling health plans to immediately and effectively deploy targeted, preventive measures. Finally, AI supports real-time monitoring and adjustment of care pathways, which helps reduce hospital readmissions and manage chronic conditions more effectively. This comprehensive, proactive approach ultimately fosters a healthier, more engaged member population while optimizing resource allocation.

IN THE REAL WORLD

Improving Star Ratings with AI & Targeted Engagement

AI plays a vital role in helping health plans not only close gaps in care, but also strategically focus on the measures that will have the greatest impact on Star Ratings. By analyzing data, AI can identify which specific Star measures, if improved, would lead to the largest increase in a plan's overall rating, allowing resources to be directed where they can have the greatest effect.

Recently, Icario partnered with a regional Medicare Advantage plan to implement a quality gaps in care program targeting historically non-compliant and hard-to-reach members. AI-driven insights pinpointed the Star measures that would have the most significant impact on improving the plan's ratings. This strategic approach allowed the plan to concentrate its efforts on a select few high-impact areas.

Once these key measures were identified, Icario deployed targeted interventions to engage non-compliant members and close these specific gaps in care.

Through this focused approach, the program improved targeted measures—breast cancer screenings and diabetes blood tests—contributing to the plan's rise from 3.5 to 4.5 Stars in the 2025 Star Ratings.

This case study demonstrates how the combination of AI-driven analysis and targeted member engagement can be used to strategically improve select Star measures, enhancing health plan performance and achieving measurable success.

AI as a Catalyst for Improving Health Outcomes

Insights gained from AI's predictive analytics can profoundly impact health plan decisions. By identifying which interventions are most effective and which members are most at risk, AI enables health plans to deploy resources more efficiently and effectively, resulting in better outcomes for the health plan and its members.

In the future, AI will play an even more critical role as our industry evolves. Health plans that embrace AI as part of their core strategy will gain a significant advantage in adapting to the changing needs and expectations of their members. With AI, health plans can anticipate future health trends, respond to emerging risks, and design real-time interventions that meet members' needs. The continuous advancements in AI technology promise even greater efficiencies and innovations, providing health plans with the adaptability to meet future challenges.

AI and machine learning are not just tools but transformative forces reshaping the healthcare landscape, enabling health plans to deliver more personalized, efficient, and informed services. By integrating AI into their digital health strategies, health plans can create a dynamic framework that meets the demands of today's members and anticipates their future needs.

"As health plans increasingly recognize the value of integrating AI into their systems and processes, they stand to gain a competitive edge, offering members better health outcomes, improved satisfaction, and greater loyalty. With AI as a catalyst, the future of healthcare will be defined by more responsive, agile, and member-focused organizations ready to thrive in a rapidly changing marketplace."

Marc Willard, CEO, Icario

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Our mission is to move people to do things that are good for them.

icariohealth.com | go@icariohealth.com

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