



Solo Primary Care Practice Stays Independent by Giving Value-Based Care a Chance

Dr. Donald Collins
Orlando, Florida

CHALLENGE

Times are tough for independent primary care practices (PCPs) as expenses rise and revenues fall. Across the nation, independent practices are facing numerous threats from health system consolidation, the strain of COVID-19, and rising health care needs in their communities.

Like many other solo practitioners, Dr. Donald Collins in Orlando, Florida, was feeling the pressure. After taking over the practice from his father, he wasn't planning to rush into making any major changes to the way his highly regarded practice delivered care.

It took a visit from an Aledade team member—and the foresight of his wife and office manager Janet Collins—to come to an important realization. By joining an accountable care organization (ACO), Dr. Collins could gain more actionable insights into his patients and get paid more appropriately for the high-quality work he was already performing.

SOLUTION

"We were at the point of having to make some hard choices about our future," said Janet, who works part-time to support the practice alongside their full-time medical assistant, a receptionist, and a billing expert.

"I have to admit we were both pretty skeptical of Aledade and the ACO model at first. But when I started talking with Aledade about value-based care and what it could do for our practice, it became clear to me very quickly that joining an ACO wouldn't be a hard choice at all."

That's because Dr. Collins already prioritized proactive, comprehensive care for his patients, Janet explained. Constant communication, yearly wellness visits, and preventive care were always hallmarks of his relationships with patients. But in the traditional fee-for-service environment, he wasn't being rewarded for these crucial activities.

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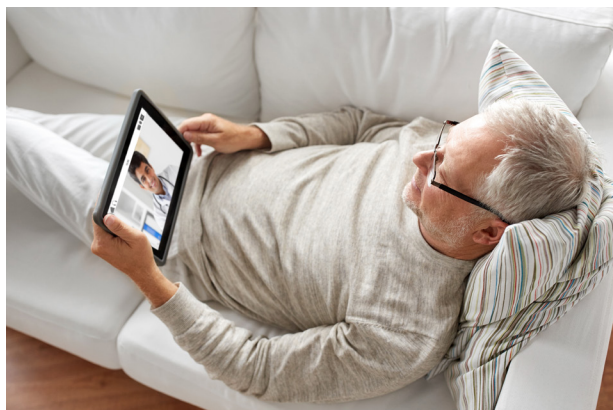
Once Janet and Dr. Collins decided to jump in, the practice was able to make small, manageable adjustments to their workflows that brought big rewards.

"Our practice transformation team at Aledade helped us identify activities that could be a little more structured and documented a little differently so that we could get reimbursed for them," said Janet.

"For example, Dr. Collins was already doing wellness checkups with alcohol and depression screenings for his Medicare patients, so it was easy to start using the standardized template for Medicare Annual Wellness Visits, which offer an enhanced reimbursement rate."

Aledade also brought additional insights about patient activities outside of the primary care environment to help stay on top of recent hospitalizations, ED visits, changes in health status, and specialist use.

"The Daily Huddle in the Aledade App complements what we're doing and gives us that extra information we need to keep us connected with our patients," said Janet. "I have not made one phone call where the patient didn't appreciate that we knew they'd been in the hospital and that we're looking out for them. It really helps provide that continuity of care that they need."



Janet urges other solo primary care practices to overcome their doubts and give value-based care the same chance that she did. "Joining an ACO is going to give you the opportunity to stay independent if that's what you want for your practice," she said. "The key is to choose the right partner for doing it."

"Aledade has never promised us anything that hasn't been true. They never told us something would happen that hasn't happened," she stressed. "It's so important for us as small business owners to have someone we can trust and rely on. And it's critical for our patients, too, because they rely on us to keep them healthy. We're really glad we made this decision and we're looking forward to the future."

– Janet Collins, Office Manager

\$2.01M

ACO revenue directly shared
across practices

\$4.19M

Florida ACO Medicare savings in latest
performance year

96% +

Quality score earned in 2019

RESULTS

The Florida 2016 ACO provided better care for more than 5,700 patients across the state in 2019. On average, practices in the ACO contacted over 90 percent of their patients after a visit to the emergency department or a hospital stay.

In 2019, the ACO achieved a quality score of more than 96 percent, helping practices in the ACO achieve Medicare shared savings for the fourth year in a row. The Florida 2016 ACO generated \$4.19 million in savings for Medicare in the latest performance year, adding to its total of \$19.9 million in savings for taxpayers since its inception.

Thanks to these incredible achievements, Dr. Collins and his colleagues in the ACO directly shared in \$2.01 million of revenue for their value-based care work, putting these practices in a better position to remain independent and continue to provide exceptional care to their communities.

For more information about value-based care visit aledade.com.