

# Exploring Additional Avenues for Patient Assistance

Atlas Health & Mayo Clinic August 9, 2022

# Learning Objectives

- Describe philanthropic medical financial aid complexities and opportunities
- Understand how scaling a patient assistance program brings value to your organization and community
- Demonstrate knowledge of best practices with data, workflow, technology, and patient experience



# Today's Speakers



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Atlas Health



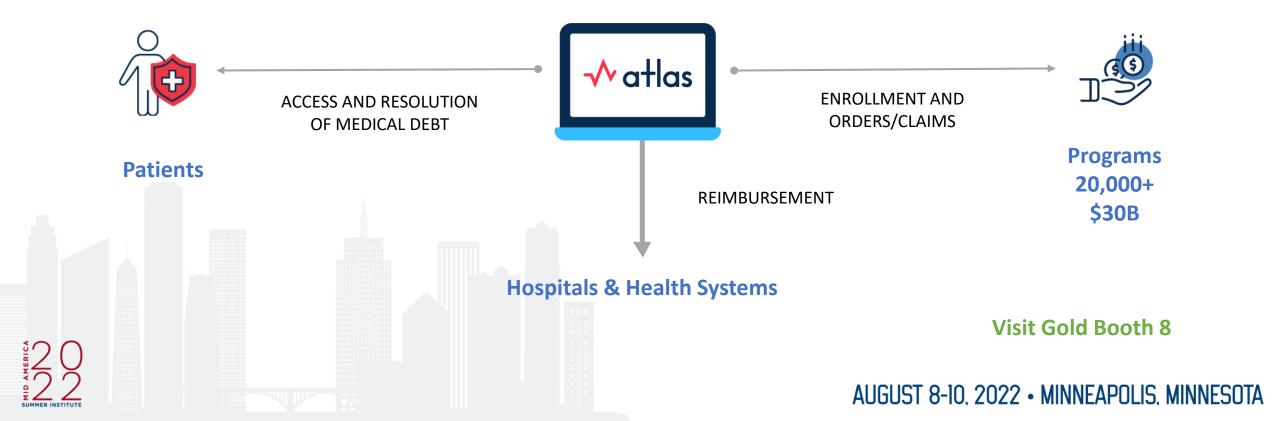


Dennis Dahlen
Chief Financial Officer
Mayo Clinic
Chair-Elect, HFMA



### About Atlas Health

Help hospitals and health systems optimize \$30B in annual philanthropic aid to advance health equity



# About Mayo Clinic



The needs of our patients come first. Our values guide us in all we do to meet our patients – wherever they may be – with a relentless focus on curing disease, connecting with people everywhere in new ways, and transforming healthcare.



**3 Destination Medical Centers** Rochester, MN Jacksonville, FL Phoenix, AZ



Community Health System
48 Sites in western Wisconsin and southern Minnesota



Medical and Surgical Practices 4,500 Physicians and scientists 100+ Specialties and services 130 Operating rooms



**1.4 Million Patients annually** from 130 countries



Medical Research per

4,552 Research personnel860 Researching physicians289 Scientific Faculty1 million square feet of research space



**Medical Education** 

Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences



Recognition

U.S. News & World Reports (2022):

Best Hospitals in the Nation – Mayo Clinic in Rochester (#1)

Best Hospitals in Minnesota (#1), Florida (#1), Arizona (#1)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2022):

6 Mayo Clinic Hospitals earned 5 stars overall





# Philanthropic Medical Financial Aid

### Patients Endure Financial Stress in Pursuit of Care

\$388B

Annual out-of-pocket medical expenses Americans face<sup>1</sup>

~40%

Share that report anxiety around ability to pay for healthcare<sup>3</sup>

25%

Share of treatment for serious medical conditions that's delayed due to costs<sup>2</sup>

+6.5%

Estimated healthcare cost increase in 2022<sup>4</sup>

# Hospitals, Health Systems and Patient Debt

\$745B

Uncompensated care costs, 2000-2020<sup>1</sup>

56%

Share of American adults with medical debt<sup>3</sup>

47%

Share of hospitals where uncompensated care increased in 2020<sup>2</sup>

\$10,000

25% of Americans with medical debt owe \$10,000 or more<sup>3</sup>



# Financial Toxicity

Excessive financial strain caused by a cancer diagnosis has detrimental effects on patients, families and society<sup>1</sup>

#### This strain is driven by:

- Rising healthcare costs
- More costs being pushed to patients
- Increase in incidence of cancer
- Expensive clinical and technological innovations<sup>2</sup>



# Philanthropic Medical Financial Aid

#### 20,000+ Patient Assistance and Social Support Programs



~\$700B

**Government Programs** 

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income
- State & County Programs



~\$30B

#### **Philanthropic Programs**

- Copay Assistance
- Diagnosis-Based Assistance
- Life Science Organizations
- Social Programs

# Patient Assistance Perspectives From Your HFMA Colleagues

- Audience insights from 2022 HFMA-sponsored webinar
- Polling results from 200 attendees:
  - Is your organization maximizing reimbursement from available patient assistance and health equity programs?
    - 87% not maximizing reimbursement
  - What is your largest challenge with patient assistance programs?
     59% challenged in every area of patient assistance
  - Can you quantify the value of your patient assistance programs?
     54% could not quantify the value of their programs





# Why Invest & Make Patient Assistance a Strategic Initiative?

# Patient Assistance as a Strategic Initiative



"The best interest of the patient is the only interest to be considered, and in order that the sick may have the benefit of advancing knowledge, union of forces is necessary." William J. Mayo, M.D. (1910)



Patient Access Financial Counseling



Denials Team



Third-Party Vendors

Mitigate cost barriers to access care

Reduce financial distress for patients

Improve patient compliance & adherence

Ensure payer compliance & monitor practices

### Patient Responsible Denials Team

MAYO CLINIC

Specialized Team proactively engages patients to reverse denials

#### PATIENT-CENTRIC REDEPLOYMENT

attrition)



Need existed for patient-centric, rather than collection-centric support for denials Specialized team handling Patient Responsible denials created January 2022, by redeploying 12 FTEs (automation &

#### SHIFTING FINANCIAL BURDEN FROM PATIENTS



New team aggressively utilizes provider and member appeal and grievance processes to obtain payer reimbursement

Vendor partner loan program now allows for interest-free payment plans

#### PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT



Team engages patients actively during the adjudication process

Denial trending and root cause analysis give visibility to denial issues, gaps in ABN and/or scheduling practices, and payer practices

#### **PROGRAM BENEFITS**



Improved Patient and Practice satisfaction by working hand-in-hand on resolutions

Improved denial visibility

Improved cash recoveries > \$8 million YTD



# Financial Counseling – Cancer Services



Pilot Program: Four End-to-End Counselors dedicated to Oncology in Mayo Clinic-Florida

#### **EXPANDED FINANCIAL COUNSELING**



Pre-service appointments identify potential insurance issues & educate patients on their plan coverage

Post-service review of Patient responsibility reports to identify/assist patients with co-pay assistance and/or external grant funding programs

#### **LEGAL & COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS**



Approval from Legal & Compliance to ensure approach is aligned with Office of Inspector General (OIG) rules and guidance

#### **EXTERNAL GRANTS**



Patients may be awarded with up to \$20K to reduce patient responsibility bills and/or pay for insurance premiums

#### PROGRAM BENEFITS



Feedback from patients received on significant improvement to their financial experience
Reduction in provider administrative burden
Estimated NOI impact \$4 million annually

### Value-Based Care and Patient Assistance

- Control total cost of care
- Clinical performance measures (i.e., adherence)
- CMS vs Commercial plans







# Patient Assistance Challenges Hospitals & Health Systems Face

# Philanthropic Program Challenges

- 20,000+ programs with unique applications, eligibility rules, enrollment policies, and reimbursement processes
- Patient eligibility matching based on clinical, financial, and insurance related criteria
- Programs open and close often, requiring constant monitoring



# Resource & Coordination Challenges

- Service Line Stakeholders
- Staffing & Tools
- Data Silos
- Internal & External Communication
- Compliance
- Tracking & Reporting





# Patient Assistance Best Practices

#### Best Practices: Focus Initiative

- Revenue Cycle as Champion
- Assess Current State
- Prioritize Locations



# Best Practices: Identify Opportunities For Matching

- Process to Identify Patients
  - Diagnoses
  - Drug Utilization
  - Financial Class
  - Social Demographics
- Process to Identify Philanthropic Programs



### Best Practices: Develop Service and Execute

- Enrollment Workflow
- Reimbursement (cash or free drug supply)
- Billing Methodology



# Best Practices: Report & Share Success Stories

- Tracking & Reporting
- Mission & Values
- Reputation & Outreach





# Social Support Programs

- Support social determinants of health
  - Transportation
  - Food & Nutrition
  - Lodging
  - Others
- Improve care coordination, both acute and outpatient
- Expand diversity for research trials



# Case Study: Covenant Health

- 2020: Patient assistance strategic initiative
  - Al matching to identify opportunities
  - EHR integration
  - Standardized workflows
  - Improved productivity through automation
  - Increased patient satisfaction
- 2021: 4.6X ROI across patient assistance





# Reflections on Philanthropic Aid & Patient Assistance





# Thank You!



# Questions?