

Health home to reward patients for taking their meds

Manhattan-based nonprofit Coordinated Behavioral Care will use a health incentive program developed by startup Wellth to encourage medication compliance in patients who have recently left a psychiatric hospital.

Wellth's app delivers reminders to patients to take their drugs daily, offering \$30 a month to CBC participants if they adhere to their doctor's orders. Users are prompted to take a photo of each pill taken, and \$2 are deducted for each missed day.

CBC, which runs a Medicaid health home to coordinate care for people with a serious mental illness or chronic conditions, is testing the program over a three-month period with about 100 patients in its Pathway Home program. The data are transmitted to care managers, who can intervene to try to keep patients from returning to the hospital, said Matthew Loper, co-founder and CEO of Wellth.

"This is a really challenging population, which has a new set of social determinants of health beyond what we've done in the past," he said. "It's both a challenge and an opportunity to show results in a new use case."

CBC is funding the rewards itself, but if the project shows improvement in medication adherence, it plans to seek support from Medicaid managed-care plans, Loper said. Wellth has demonstrated average compliance of 89%, compared with a baseline of about 30% to 50%, he said.

Wellth's other clients include Mount Sinai Health System, Staten Island PPS, RiverSpring Health, St. John's Episcopal Hospital and Trenton Health Team. It has previously promoted medication adherence for conditions such as diabetes and heart failure. —J.L."