

# VNS Health Brings Its Own Personal Care Analytics Tool To Market

*Patrick Filbin, Oct 23, 2022*

VNS Health has created its own data-driven tasking tool. The company believes it will be a game changer.

The tool — officially called the VNS Health HELPS Tool — uses risk analytics and other data to generate health care plan recommendations automatically.

At VNS Health, the tool has already administered over 70,000 recommendations since April 2020 when the service was created. Now it is taking the tool public.

“The problem that we were trying to solve was to get the consistency of personal care service hours to our members that we felt that they needed,” David O’Malley, senior vice president for product strategy at VNS Health MSO, told Home Health Care News. “There weren’t great adherence rates by the clinicians, and so we set out to fix that.”

New York-based VNS Health is one of the largest — and oldest — nonprofit home- and community-based health care organizations in the U.S.

The company’s service offerings include home health, hospice, personal care, palliative care services, mental health support and more.

There is a lot of subjectivity when it comes to personal care. That subjectivity can generally be measured by the amount of hours that a health plan member receives during the week.

“You can literally have two different clinicians go to the same person and come up with different personal care needs,” O’Malley said. “What HELPS does is it tries to take that subjectivity away. It does that by applying consistent algorithms based on the uniform assessment that New York State has as an input, and it gives guidance to the clinician on what a standard is.”

Every health plan in New York, for example, needs to use some sort of assessment tool that is approved by the state. In measuring clinician adherence to the recommendation before implementing the HELPS tool, VNS Health had a 26% adherence rate.

HELPS brought that to a 74% adherence rate.

At the end of the day, a clinician can still make changes based on their judgment, O’Malley said. But the HELPS tool is there as a data-driven guide to equip clinicians with a set of standards that has proven results.

After nearly three years of tinkering with the tool, adding quality measures and finally learning how to commercialize the product, HELPS is ready to be rolled out to other health care organizations.

“We obviously had to make sure that it works for ourselves,” O’Malley said. “We needed to make sure that it was clinically sound. We really needed to go through a process of ensuring that other organizations would be comfortable using this tool in a safe and secure manner so that they have the confidence that not only are their members being served correctly, but we ourselves are treating them with the utmost of quality that we expect from ourselves.”

O’Malley believes HELPS strikes a perfect balance between the needs of clinicians, consumers and health plans.

He also believes this is a great example of VNS Health being at the forefront of the tech-enabled environment home-based care finds itself in.

“Everybody likes to talk about how AI is affecting the health care experience in a positive manner,” O’Malley said. “We’re not talking about it, we’re actually doing it. This is no longer futuristic, this is what we do.”

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