DuPont Pioneer innovationLEADER

1. Originality of innovation(s): Is this a completely new concept/idea/process or the re-imagining of an existing one? Was it developed independently or in corporation with others?

UnityPoint Health leaders drew inspiration from several sources, while ideating the concepts around its new Innovation Center. As part of health system’s work on a national stage with other leading health care companies, discussions with several organizations across many industries drove UnityPoint Health to look at an opportunity to invest more heavily in innovation. This started several years ago when UnityPoint Health teamed up with five other large health care companies to create a $150 million innovation fund focused on improving care delivery. UnityPoint Health is growing its investment in innovation significantly going into 2018 by creating an in-house Innovation Center and dedicated Innovation Team.

While much of the planning has taken place in 2017, the Innovation Center will fully launch in 2018. The goal is to foster a culture of innovation to unlock the ideas and creativity of all team members to advance health care delivery. UnityPoint Heath leaders are asking its 30,000+ employees to come up with ideas about ways to grow revenue, improve experience and reduce waste/cost while pursing market advancement, employee engagement and bettering clinical outcomes. By empowering and engaging the UnityPoint Health family, team members’ ideas will be developed into tangible, validated realities that will be felt by everyone we serve.

No idea is too big or too small for the Innovation Center. Ideas can include everything from processes and technologies, to new business models or advances in delivery systems. We understand the simplest of ideas can create some of the most inspiring transformations. Once ideas are submitted, they’ll go through the innovation process funnel, and UnityPoint Health will invest in top ideas and work with the team member to move the idea from conceptual to operational status.

Please check our [Innovation Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-CdtBX0d3s&feature=youtu.be).

2. Impact of the innovations(s): Did this innovations meet and unmet need? How has it affected a specific industry and/or the public at large? If internal, what impact has it had on processes and efficiencies within the organization?

Working for UnityPoint Health isn’t just a job, it’s a passion. Our focus on innovation is tapping into that passion in our team members to show how much they matter in improving what we do for our customers. We also understand the future success of UnityPoint Health is dependent on being an innovative company that attracts, retains and extracts the ideas and creativity of all team members in order to provide the best, most efficient care for patients. The Innovation Center allows UnityPoint Health team members to shine in a way not possible before. It’s a way for employees to feel more invested in the organization by directly impacting care delivery. It encourages people to think outside of the box and challenge the status quo to build a culture of innovation and forward-thinking team members. It does this by making innovation and problem solving a focus, investing in resources dedicated to this work and providing team members with a place to go to see their ideas developed. The Innovation Center is rooted in the fact that the best ideas come from those closest to the work. We know those who are interfacing with patients, families and consumers on a daily basis have ideas that can change health care, not only at UnityPoint Health, but across the entire industry.

The UnityPoint Health Innovation journey has two main components:

* Innovation Incubator (internal)
  + Invest in culture: empower and engage all 30,000+ team members
  + Develop team members’ ideas into tangible, validated realities
* Innovation Accelerator (external)
  + New partnerships and business models
  + New revenue sources
  + Advance health care delivery by providing access to the continuum of care, clinical and administrative leaders

The initial focus on the Innovation Incubator will drive internal engagement and create the culture of innovation necessary for the Accelerator to thrive. The Accelerator will take ideas generated by the Incubator to help focus and source external business opportunities and partnerships to act as catalyst in realizing innovative ideas. These two components together will drive transformation, create value for patients and consumers and build a more diversified growth portfolio while building the necessary competencies to succeed in the rapidly evolving industry. Innovation is an opportunity to bring internal and external ideas, processes, technologies and new business models into the delivery system to advance the way UnityPoint Health serve its communities. Innovation is as much an investment in culture development as it is growth and transformation. Innovation will be another key driver of engagement and creating a high-performing organization, which will only add to the cultural development already underway at UnityPoint Health.

3. Culture of innovation: Does the company promote an atmosphere conducive to innovation? Have they consistently been seen as a leader in their field when it comes to innovation?

Being a health care leader means UnityPoint Health is constantly looking for ways to be more innovative. As an organization, the system is working to diversify its portfolio by getting into the health insurance, pharmacy and retail spaces. Through a joint venture, UnityPoint Health now self-insures its 30,000+ employees and also offers a Medicare Advantage product for consumers, one of the first in the state of Iowa. In the pharmacy space, UnityPoint Health – Fort Dodge recently added a full-service, retail pharmacy making access to medication easier and more efficient for patients and families. Additionally, in 2017, UnityPoint Health added a chief pharmacy officer to the executive team to improve medication management, care coordination and the clinical and financial performance of pharmacy services across the health system.

UnityPoint Health was one of the first in the country to be a part of the Pioneer Accountable Care Organization (ACO) and one of two rural organizations. Even though it was difficult to align quality services impacting patient care, especially in a rural setting, UnityPoint Health took a calculated risk in one of its smallest markets, and that path led the health system to joining the Next Generation ACO group later on. We applied lessons from earlier models to help us learn what we needed to do in order to move toward full capitation. At the same time, UnityPoint Health has encountered certain benefits with regard to payment and metrics. Our work even led to Harvard positioning us as an ACO case study for other organizations.

UnityPoint Health is also involved in innovative pilot projects, including one that essentially allows patients to recover at home instead of experiencing a traditional hospital stay. This strategy directly aligns with making health care an easier, more personal experience for the people we serve. The pilot project resulted in improved satisfaction, reduced recovery time, reduced chance of readmission and lowered cost.

The health system is also embracing technology for better access to care. UnityPoint Health Virtual Care recently aligned with a new partner to open up access to UnityPoint Health providers through a new virtual platform. Patients and consumers can now access a UnityPoint Clinic provider from anywhere through their computer, mobile or smart device.

UnityPoint Health providers are leading the way on new health care innovations, too. For example, Dr. Bilal Kaaki, a UnityPoint Clinic physician in Waterloo, is leading development and FDA approval on a new treatment for urinary incontinence, called eCoin. UnityPoint Health – Waterloo is one of only five centers in the United States offering this procedure to patients.

4. Commercial impact of innovation(s): Has the innovation gone to market? What financial evidence or market acceptance information does the innovation have to support new value for the end user? What is the quantifiable evidence of success?

Innovation is something we know and do well at UnityPoint Health. It is part of our culture to be constantly working to improve and change in order to better serve both our patients and team members. This year alone, we’ve gone to market with several new products or upgrades, including online appointment scheduling that’s available around the clock. This 2017 optimization has led to a 115 percent increase in pediatric access in the system’s largest market and a doubling in the number of patients self-scheduling appointments online since April 2017. UnityPoint Health also recently upgraded the Virtual Care program with impressive result in the first eight months, growing to nearly 7,000 customers and adding 1,000 new accounts per month.

We expect new innovations and ideas to shine through with the launch of the Innovation Center in 2018. The goal to move forward with this project was simple once we realized we basically have 30,000+ entrepreneurs at our fingertips. Our team members are often our patients, and all of them are consumers of our brand. They’ve got unique internal and external perspectives, so we are using the Innovation Center as a place for them to share ideas. The Innovation Center and the dedicated Innovation Team will create a culture of innovation focused on driving a better health care experience, growing the organization and/or reducing waste.

From pilot testing in 2017, one submitted innovation is being prepared for launch in the first quarter of 2018, and two new partnership opportunities were identified. The goal for 2018 is a full-scale launch of the Innovation Center with an organizational challenge to identify the next great idea for improving ambulatory experience. The Innovation Center is the next big investment to continue to push transformation of health care delivery, both locally and industry-wide. UnityPoint Health is always seeking ways to develop current capabilities and grow new capabilities in an effort to improve care delivery for the people we serve, in addition to being a leading voice for change in the industry.