



Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine and HealCommunity partner to solve rural healthcare crisis



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The Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine, led by Dr. Cheng Ruan, part of the Memorial Hermann Medical doctor Accountable Care Organization (ACO), has partnered with digital health leader HealCommunity to solve some of the most vexing problems in healthcare, rural health.

With some areas of Texas struggling with primary care ratios as large as 100,000 patients for every doctor, it's become clear that a new strategy is needed to deliver care to people who need it the most.

Dr. Cheng Ruan said: "Having delivered our own unique brand of community focused lifestyle medicine in our clinic for over 6,000 patients since the pandemic, we feel we are well positioned to lead the charge to bring care to those in rural areas of Texas who don't currently have access.

In order to scale their offerings, Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine has partnered with HealCommunity, a digital health organization that has pioneered the use of virtual lifestyle medicine groups that are billed to insurance.

HealCommunity takes 20 patients at a time through their signature 24-week process led by Board Certified Health Coaches to support patients improving their fundamentals of health: what they eat, how they sleep, how they move, how they relax and how they connect with their community and environment.

HealCommunity CEO James Maskell said: "This is the kind of opportunity that HealCommunity was built for. People in rural areas don't have access to the kind of health promoting care that is needed to prevent and reverse chronic illness. With our completely virtual delivery we are able to scale to the level of need."

Dr Cheng Ruan said: "The care that HealCommunity is delivering is strongly aligned with the care model we've built at Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine, but with their tech platform and health coaching structure, we now have a more scalable tool. We are looking forward to deploying this alongside Chronic Care Management and Remote Patient Monitoring services."

The initial contract between Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine and HealCommunity will aim to impact 55,000 patients over the next two and a half years, and will be recruited through pharmacies where the patients get their medications.

This represents HealCommunity's biggest contract to date but they have also partnered with individual clinics, hospital systems and other accountable care organizations with the goal of scaling lifestyle medicine to broader populations. Their outcomes have been particularly impressive with anxiety and depression, and also with fatigue, chronic pain and neurological function.

Another factor of this partnership is the use of health coaches. Dr. Cheng Ruan has been at the forefront of proving the efficacy on health coaching for CMS and HealCommunity CEO James Maskell said: "We are really excited to be part of the team proving that health coaching is a legitimate and valuable part of the future of medicine, and that for most patients, starting with a health coach might be their best pathway to long term, sustainable health."

We look forward to following this story.



If you want to find out more about HealCommunity, go to:

www.healcommunity.com