HealthManagement
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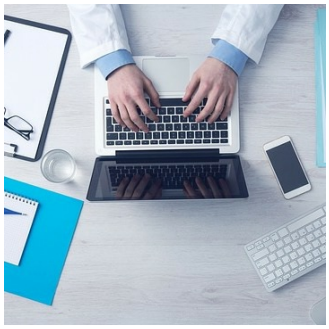
Apple tech enabled healthcare to cut healthcare costs



Giant tech company Apple, maker of the health-tracking tool Apple Watch, continues its foray into healthcare by creating in-house clinics and health service for company employees. Apple says its primary care health clinics, called AC Wellness, will provide a “unique concierge-like healthcare experience” that is “enabled by technology”.

Two healthcare centres are planned to open in the spring in Santa Clara County, California, around Cupertino, near Apple Park and Infinite Loop headquarters. To man these centres, the iPhone maker is looking to hire primary and acute care physicians, physical therapists, nurses and other health professionals. One job advert for a primary care physician, for example, emphasises the need for experience of “preventing future disease” and “preventive care” with an “enthusiasm for new methods of care delivery using technology”. In addition, the company plans to recruit “designers” who will be responsible for implementing staff programmes to promote healthy behaviour and prevent disease.

With a workforce reportedly consisting of more than 120,000 people, Apple says healthcare makes up one of the largest staffing costs. A reduction in its outlay is expected by bringing healthcare services in-house and leveraging proactive schemes to improve worker health. Apple will reportedly use its AC Wellness clinics and staff to test its own healthcare-related technologies.

Currently, the company is involved in studies around heart health partnering with Stanford School of Medicine using its Apple Watch and its heart rate sensor. Healthcare is a critical recruitment tool for businesses in the United States, with companies gaining tax breaks for offering services, but the costs of providing those services are growing. Healthcare spending amounted to $3.3tn in 2016 in the U.S. alone, an 18 percent share of the country’s gross domestic product and 4.3 percent higher than the previous year, according to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Source: The Guardian

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