

Enhancing dental care and benefits through digital transformation

As in all healthcare, the digital age and new technologies in dental care are transforming the industry — including changing preventive and patient care and access to care, and ultimately driving better whole-health outcomes in the most efficient way. For employers, providing employees with the best, state-of-the-art dental benefits will elevate their overall health and wellness, leading to a healthier, happier, and more productive work environment.

Today, there are several emerging digital innovations — from administrative to clinical — that are promising to reinvent how patients access, engage, and thrive with dental care. These advances can help employers connect their populations to preventive care and early detection, and deliver better patient experiences and outcomes.



Teledentistry

While telehealth is not a brand new technology, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted many dentists to quickly adopt and embrace virtual visits with patients. Teledentistry provides a more efficient, affordable, and accessible option for dental care, including the ability to do virtual screening, consultation, triage and diagnosis, and monitoring of conditions. With video chats, image and data sharing, and use of mobile apps, teledentistry facilitates care and makes it easy for employees to take control of their oral health.



Augmented intelligence

From diagnosis and treatment planning to practice management and efficiency in claims, augmented intelligence (AI) is positioned to transform the way dentists care for their patients, according to the American Dental Association. AI helps dentists use digital capabilities and algorithms to automate and streamline dental practice and payer procedures, such as analyzing health data and evaluating radiographs and records, as well as monitoring phone calls and computerizing insurance processes. AI enables quicker, enhanced insights and clinical intelligence for a more efficient and effective patient experience.



Digital engagement and workflows

Using mobile apps for appointments and check-in, chatbots for questions, and digital intake and recordkeeping are other new, fast-developing ways in which technology is making dentistry more efficient, user-friendly, and less painful for patients. These digital tools are also helping employers deliver the best dental benefits to employees with easy access to information and cost-effective implementation.



Integrated health and dental data

There is a growing body of research that shows better dental care has a significant impact on overall health. As technology continues to enhance the dental industry, it's important for employers to also connect their dental data to their health plan. Connected health and dental plans ensure that holistic diagnosis and any gaps in a patient's health are appropriately identified with proactive treatment. For example, if a dental visit detected gum disease in a patient with a health condition like diabetes, appropriate dental care would be incorporated into the overall management plan. Employers should embrace dental benefit plans that incorporate advanced technology and that follow an integrated healthcare model. Innovative dental care supported by digital solutions will enhance prevention and treatment and drive optimal outcomes for patients — translating to lower costs and reduced health complications for the industry at large.



For more information on the latest dental trends including digital transformation, talk to an Anthem representative.