

A new Model of Care

Dr. Ihsan Al Marzooqi tells *Premium* how GluCare, an integrated Diabetes centre, can provide value to the health care system.



The management of chronic disease has been a top priority in the cost management programs of payers and providers. Contributing in this endeavour to manage a chronic disease such as diabetes is GluCare, headed by Dr. Ihsan Al Marzooqi, co-founder and managing director of the centre. The following is an excerpt of a conversation with Premium.

How does GluCare process data?

GluCare has introduced a completely new and transformative way of managing diabetes, one that reinvents diabetes care and transforms lives. GluCare partners with diabetes patients to enable and empower

them to successfully manage their condition. Through using technology- paired with personalised and expert care - GluCare eliminates the generic and ineffective advice and guesswork employed by traditional care providers. Instead, GluCare monitors every minute of every day of patients' lives, using real-time data and insights – and real-time risk factors to support making better decisions allowing patients to better manage their chronic condition.

As the world's first healthcare provider to empower patients through Remote Continuous Data Monitoring, we have access to data direct from our patients. We process data by using machine learning algorithms

and artificial intelligence that together, allow for real-time predictive risk scores on 19 different health conditions related to diabetes. The signals are received from a range of wearable and connected devices including a wearable band, continuous glucose monitor, blood glucose monitor, connected blood pressure cuffs, and connected scales. GluCare collects around a terabyte of information per patient per month, and the data resides within the cloud hosted in the UAE. The remote data becomes part of the electronic medical record of the patients. It also allows us to empower our clinicians and patients delivering evidence-based, real-time guidance between clinic visits. Feedback is delivered by both our machine learning algorithms, and our remote human care team in both an offline and online approach.

What is the company hoping to achieve by partnering with insurance companies?

With our new model of care, we are partnering with insurance companies like AXA to ultimately create a new standard for diabetes care and improve outcomes for patients across the board. We're doing that through Remote Continuous Data Monitoring and also through implementing Digital Therapeutics (DTx) services within the standard protocol of diabetes management. GluCare is the only provider in the region to provide insurance companies with remote compliance reports and in-clinic disease specific outcome reports. This will allow insurance companies to enter into a fee-for-performance (vs fee-for-service) type of contract moving forward. We hope this approach will govern and improve the relationships between providers and insurers.

Due to the fact that we are a single speciality center and are transparent with our outcomes, we are also in discussions with insurers regarding introducing capitation models and disease management programs to the diabetic populations managed by these insurers.

Our innovative 'continuous healthcare' operating model reduces unnecessary patient visits, and our aim is to keep clinic visit numbers limited to guidelines set by the American Diabetes Association. We assess the impact of our program on diabetes clinical outcomes and on total diabetes and medical costs.

GluCare provides partner payers with

clinical outcome reporting on their patient population. We measure patient outcomes in accordance to the International Consortium for Health Outcomes Measurements (ICHOM) diabetes standard set, and provide these reports to our partner payers.

Does GluCare plan to tie up with other third-party administrators as well?

GluCare has already signed with Nas and Neuron and their patients are also benefiting from our DTx platform as part of their routine diabetes care. We aim to work with third party administrators such as Neuron/Nas to lower the total cost of diabetics through our new model of care and our propriety platform.

What is the sample size of the preliminary studies?

As we are an operating outpatient clinic, the data we gather will depend on the number of patients that utilise our care.

How many members have subscribed to the GluCare way of digitised healthcare?

Since we opened in September 2020, we have currently around 60 patients who have visited the center and are now part of the Remote Continuous Data Monitoring program.

Would strategic collaboration with healthcare authorities be of importance to GluCare?

GluCare is an example of both the power of Middle Eastern innovation as well as the power of collaboration, as illustrated by our relationship with partners in Silicon Valley. We believe strongly in the power of collaboration and would welcome further and more meaningful collaborations with regulators and insurers. So far, we have been graciously supported by the Dubai Health Authority (DHA) and the Dubai Health Insurance Cooperation, both of which see the potential in what we've set out to do.

GluCare directly impacts 11 of the 15 strategic program initiatives that the DHA has set for providers listed in their 2016-2021 strategy. We believe collaboration with both the regulator and insurers about the mainstream coverage of and for certain types of medical equipment (such as continuous glucose monitors) and reimbursement for remote patient monitoring services will help drive innovation, and lower the total costs of diabetic care in the UAE. 📍



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