

Insurance claims analysis shows impact of pain management tool

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Members of WEA Trust who used a digital platform for managing lower back pain cut use of emergency and urgent care by more than 90 percent.

That's from a recent two-year insurance claims analysis from Madison-based WEA Trust and Kiio, another Madison company that developed the platform.

WEA Trust is a not-for-profit health insurance company serving public employees, with more than 100,000 members. Starting in January 2018, the company partnered with Kiio to introduce a white-label version of the Kiio platform to all of its members, regardless of medical history.

To measure the impact of the platform on users, WEA Trust compared claims data from 2017 to data from 2018, and found the results of the Kiio program “clearly demonstrate value.” Overall medical spend for the Kiio users decreased 64 percent, while emergency and urgent care visits went down by more than 90 percent.

At the same time, the number of injections for those users decreased by over 90 percent. Imaging also fell by 32 percent, while radio frequency ablation — a pain therapy that relies on electrical currents — fell by 67 percent.

Dr. Tim Bartholow, chief medical officer of WEA Trust, says the company is “committed to being good stewards” of member health.

“That means providing access to care that is high-quality, effective, convenient, and affordable,” Bartholow (pictured here) said in the report. “Above all, it means doing no harm. And the fact is that unnecessary MRIs, injections, and surgeries can do harm.”

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