

Sam Oddson from SidekickHealth about NLSDays' The new cross-industry playground super session



Sam Oddsson
CMO & Co-founder SidekickHealth
SidekickHealth

What is a digital companion?

– When we talk about a digital companion, we are referring to a digitally delivered clinical treatment, which augments pharmacotherapy to boost health outcomes. Patients access the treatment via a mobile phone application, which is designed to address lifestyle factors and nudge people towards lasting behavior modification that increases the overall efficacy of combination treatment. We firmly believe that in the near future it will be unthinkable for a new drug being marketed without a digital care element. As combination treatment, medicine agencies such as the FDA and EMA will then approve a combination treatment that consists of a drug and a digital therapeutic to be marketed and reimbursed by payers.

In brief, what are the benefits of integrating digital therapeutics from drug development to market?

– Sidekick has shown that adding digital care to traditional drug therapy has a positive impact on health outcomes, as well as addressing factors that the molecule cannot - such as reduced fatigue and stress, and better sleep and mental health. As well as increased treatment adherence. So there is a clear benefit to the patient. As for our pharmaceutical partners, then as combination treatments can result in better outcomes it helps them think beyond the pill and prepare for a future of value-based reimbursement - where payers reimburse for outcomes not just pills. As well as improving market access and positioning. A product consisting of a digital treatment and a molecule simply delivers better results.

Gamification is a trendy word, what does it mean to Sidekick – how do you gamify the digital therapeutics?

– Yes, you are absolutely right - it is perhaps even too trendy. But Sidekick is not a game. We use gamification elements to keep patients engaged for long periods of time and motivate them to adhere to treatment and improve their lifestyle. This is just one of many tricks in our toolbox, but by prompting people to complete missions and challenges in the app, collecting altruistic rewards at the end, we manage to make lifestyle changes such as stop drinking sugary drinks or increase your walking capability fun. Sidekick speaks to people, not patients.

Have you had any special projects during the pandemic?

– There is a silver lining for digital health - this horrible pandemic has accelerated wider adoption of digital health solutions. Sidekick adopted its platform to take the pressure off overburdened hospitals and clinics by working with Iceland's national emergency services to provide a nationwide COVID-19 support program to remotely triage, support, and manage infected individuals in home isolation. Healthcare professionals (HCPs) can remotely monitor and manage a large number of patients and are called to action as needed, saving countless hours of phone calls for symptom evaluation, focusing their resources on the most urgent cases. Sidekick created an algorithm that helps HCPs more rapidly classify patients by disease severity. Through the CE-marked Sidekick COVID-19 program, patients self-report on a panel of symptoms and measurements multiple times a day. And the system is now applied across geographies to support patients with other chronic illnesses, but as we know, access to clinics has been severely restricted during the pandemic.

What are you hoping to find in the NLSDays partnering meetings?

– I am looking forward to connecting with people across the healthcare landscape to discuss and share ideas on how to move digital health forward and bring healthcare into people's homes.

back to
nlsdays.com