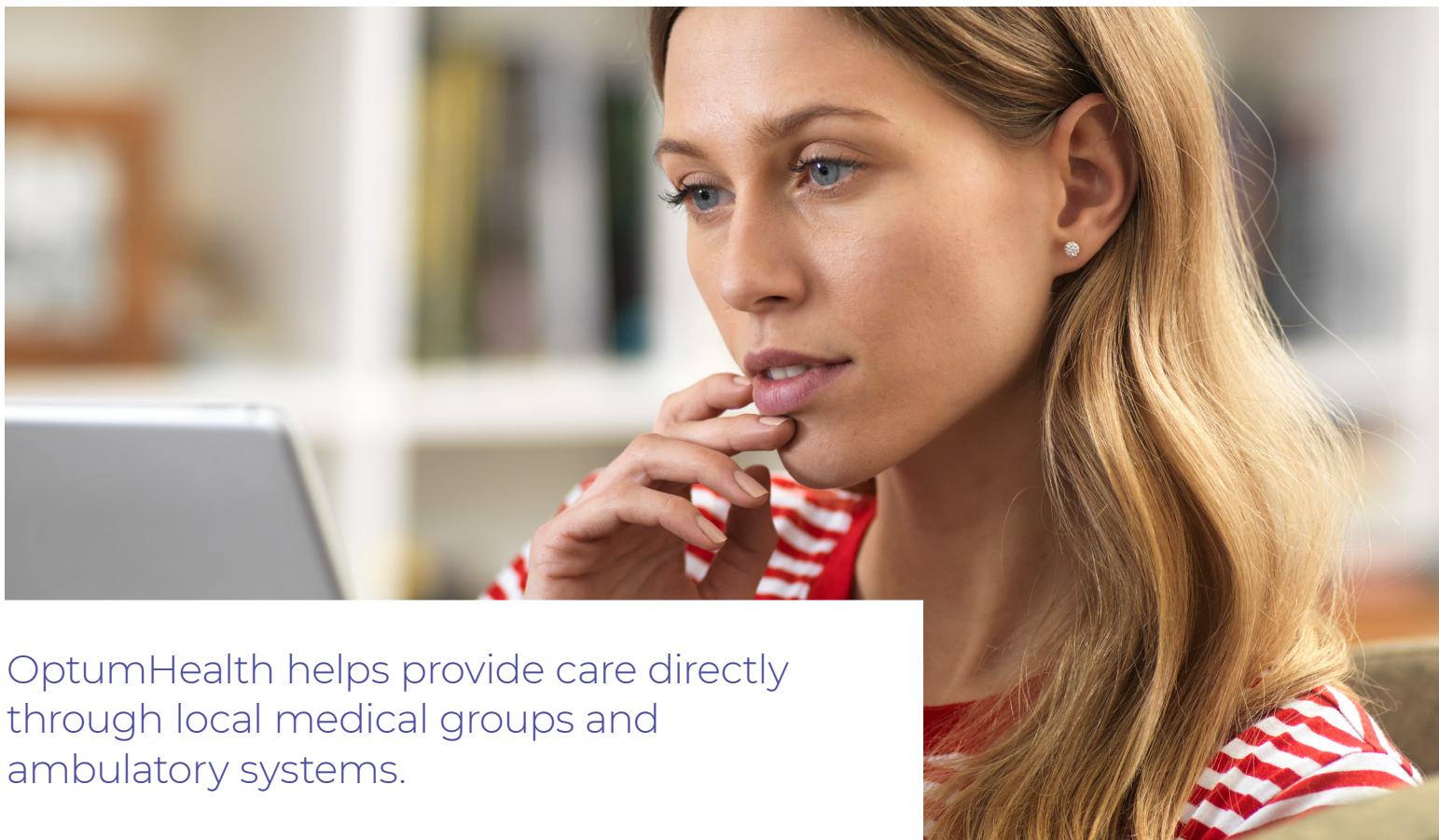




FORUM SPOTLIGHT SERIES

Serving the Health Care Needs of Those Who Serve Us

Speaker: Kimberlee Vandervoorn, JD, Vice President, Consumer Solutions, UnitedHealth Group/Optum



OptumHealth helps provide care directly through local medical groups and ambulatory systems.

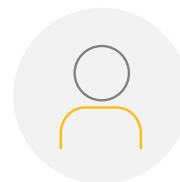
A subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group, Optum provides consulting and analytics to organizations across many industries. One of these organizations is the National Restaurant Association, with whom they have partnered to deliver care for people in the hospitality space.

Hospitality businesses rely on their employees to be the face of their brand, which means bringing their best, healthiest selves to work. Yet many restaurants and hotels—especially those with seasonal and part-time staff—do not offer health insurance as a benefit.

In this session at Forum 2021, Kimberlee Vandervoorn, Vice President of Consumer Solutions at Optum, discussed how their virtual care package has opened access to care for hospitality employees who might not otherwise have it.

Hospitality workers face unique challenges in accessing healthcare

For context, about 13 million people work in hospitality and tourism in the U.S., according to Statista, and many face particular healthcare access barriers in their lives. The hospitality industry is a 24/7 business model;



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employees have shifts at all hours—usually odd hours. “Very often they are working during the time when they can access primary care—and even urgent care,” said Vandervoorn, therefore “folks tend to use the emergency room if they have to, which ultimately ends up costing them an enormous amount of money that some cannot afford.”

On top of odd hours, many workers in the industry don’t receive paid time off. This makes taking time to seek healthcare for themselves or care for a loved one nearly impossible. For many it comes down to choosing their health or earning an income—and many must choose the latter.

Many businesses in hospitality, however, simply don’t have sufficient profit margin to offer employer-sponsored health benefits. Those that do offer employer-based health plans often limit them to full-time employees. Yet the majority of workers are part-time or seasonal, making them ineligible for these plans. Vandervoorn noted that “because people don’t have health benefits, this enormous population is very unlikely to seek care.”

Labor shortages position healthcare as a core workforce strategy

The pent-up demand post-COVID for travel, lodging and restaurant dining has run into a severe labor shortage in hospitality. As a result, hospitality employers are turning to health benefits to recruit new hires and meet

BARRIERS TO SEEKING CARE



Odd shifts

make it tough to access primary care and urgent care during normal hours



No PTO

Leaving work for a healthcare visit often means giving up income



Part-time work

The few employers who provide healthcare benefits limit these to full-time employees

customer demand. “I’m finding that hospitality employers are really utilizing health and wellness solutions to incentivize people to come back to work, and address their need to attract and retain talent, while really supporting a healthier workforce,” shared Vandervoorn.

Of course, offering better benefits is not a one-way street, where only employees reap the rewards of expanded healthcare access. As Vandervoorn noted, offering comprehensive and accessible healthcare is a compelling talent acquisition strategy, one particularly valuable in a highly competitive job market. But beyond recruitment, offering virtual care benefits that lower employees’ healthcare costs while meeting their shift schedules can also lower operating costs—by reducing turnover and training needs, as well as reducing absenteeism.

In an industry with traditionally slim profit margins, lowering internal costs while improving workforce satisfaction is often a challenge, but offering virtual care benefits is poised to do just that. In this sense, virtual care that meets employees where they are empowers employees and employers alike to deliver a high-quality service experience.

Addressing care gaps requires a whole-person approach to health

As the industry shifts in the direction of more comprehensive healthcare standards, Vandervoorn underscored the importance of expanding our traditional notions of health to encompass a whole-person approach to care. “One thing that became very clear during the pandemic is that it’s critical to think in terms of whole-person wellness,” she shared. “That’s

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Kimberlee Vandervoorn,
Vice President, Consumer
Solutions at Optum





three parts. It's medical, it's psychological and mental, and it's social." Taking a closer look at mental health, Vandervoorn shared that there has been a 30% increase in depression since 2020 in the United States, and yet 55% of counties don't have a psychiatrist.

Under these conditions, it can take months to get an in-person appointment with a psychiatrist or a mental health therapist. That's why Optum partnered with Teladoc Health to fill in these care gaps. "Teladoc Health has more than 2,000 psychiatrists...[they have] psychiatrists in every state," she said. "With Teladoc HealthiestYou, it takes on average only 10 days to get an appointment with a psychiatrist or a therapist." According to Vandervoorn, this ease in scheduling virtual mental health care visits also means people can seek help more regularly. "It's critical to bring these types of solutions to all industries, but particularly to hospitality," she added. When seeking traditional care often means giving up your paycheck, many employees are forced to choose money over their mental health care needs. But virtual health provides a workaround, so hospitality workers can seek care without having to give up either.

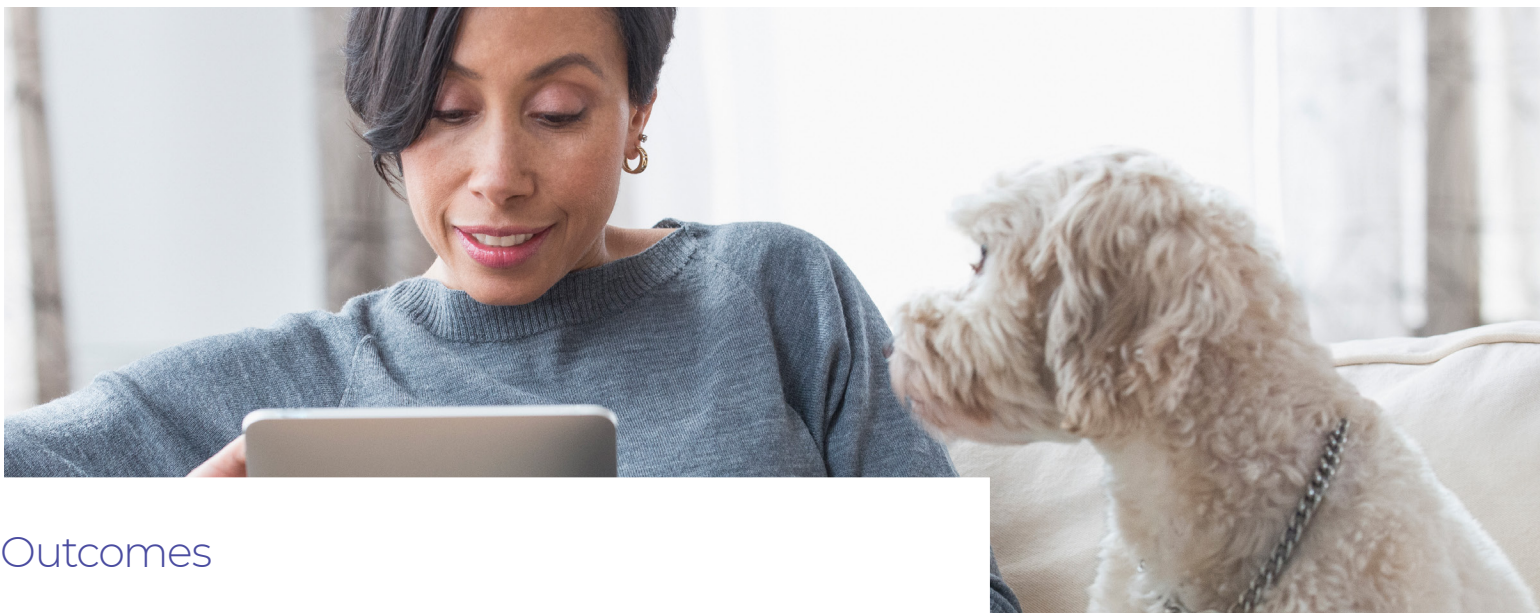


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Virtual mental health
solutions can help fill care
gaps from these shortages



Outcomes

Optum and the National Restaurant Association decided to partner with Teladoc Health over a year ago to transform healthcare for hospitality workers. Since then, they have helped more than 75 hospitality businesses offer virtual healthcare services to their workforce through Teladoc Health's HealthiestYou, with coverage that today extends to over 1,500 members.

What can employers in the hospitality industry expect from extending virtual care benefits to their workforce? According to Vandervoorn "data shows, over and over again, that businesses who use telehealth [have] medical costs going down incrementally."

But beyond lowering costs, Vandervoorn has seen firsthand the positive impact that whole-person virtual health has had on this particular employee population. "It is filling gaps in a very, very critical and vital way," she said. "Telehealth is a gift to this entire industry."

Optum and the National Restaurant Association are transforming healthcare in the hospitality space



75+

hospitality
businesses that
now offer virtual
healthcare services



15,000

members
covered through
Teladoc Health's
HealthiestYou

Visit our [Resource Center](#) to learn more about the power and potential of whole-person virtual care.

Actionable takeaways

- 1 Consider how virtual healthcare fits into your workforce strategy to improve employee health in a way that also delivers business value
- 2 Examine which barriers to care are experienced by your workforce, and seek solutions to these access problems to differentiate yourself from competitors
- 3 Focus on providing flexibility and giving employees options to manage their health as ways to attract and retain talent

Speaker bio



Kimberlee Vandervoorn leads a joint venture partnership between UnitedHealth Group and the National Restaurant Association, partnering with 68 national and state hospitality associations to bring health and wellness solutions to the approximately 17 million people working in the hospitality industry.

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LEARN MORE: TeladocHealth.com | engage@teladochealth.com

About Teladoc Health: Teladoc Health is empowering all people everywhere to live healthier lives by transforming the healthcare experience. Recognized as the world leader in whole-person virtual care, Teladoc Health leverages clinical expertise, advanced technology and actionable data insights to meet the evolving needs of consumers and healthcare professionals.

