DISCERN

HEALTH

About Discern Health

Discern advises clients across the private and public sectors. Our focus is on helping to define the value of health care services through quality-based payment and delivery models. These models align performance with incentives by rewarding doctors, hospitals, suppliers, and patients for working together to improve health care while lowering total costs.

Discern provides the expertise of a larger firm, while maintaining a responsive, flexible, and personalized approach.

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Federally registered small business
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Top-performing health care organizations understand that value-based care is a transformational force in the industry. Life sciences companies such as pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers are adapting their business models by implementing value and quality strategies that meet the demands of changing regulations, evolving science, new care delivery methods, and shifting patient priorities.

Discern Health specializes in helping life sciences companies analyze how performance measures and innovative payment models shape the market for their products. Throughout a product's life cycle, Discern identifies opportunities to enhance the product's value propositions for patients, providers, and payers.

Our Solutions

Discern Health helps leading life sciences companies proactively engage in value-based care by:

- Monitoring the quality environment for measure gaps and opportunities for a specific product or clinical area
- Demonstrating market need and product value for patients and providers through innovative research design, return-on-investment models, and data analytics
- Understanding behavior incentives for change in access, care, and treatment for specific therapeutic areas
- Conducting ecosystem analyses to support internal strategy development and discussions with customers
- Educating sales forces about key quality and value-based concepts and challenges facing their customers
- Building internal systems and leadership teams to coordinate multidisciplinary value-based care initiatives
- Developing partnerships with external stakeholders through contracting models that reward better patient outcomes and value
- Creating data dashboards that highlight provider and plan performance on measures and participation in value-based payment to support business development efforts

Our Expertise

The Discern team has decades of leadership experience with health care measurement and payment models at national organizations including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), National Quality Forum (NQF), and National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). We offer a wide range of subject matter expertise and technical capabilities to solve performance measurement and improvement challenges. Our expertise includes:

- Quality measure development & implementation
- Measure set development
- Guidelines & pathways that define quality care delivery
- Alternative incentive & payment models
- Patient-centered care transformation

Discern supports more than 50% of the largest 25 pharmaceutical companies.

Select Project Examples

Discern Health helps clients enhance care and improve patient outcomes related to conditions across a variety of therapeutic areas, including cardiology, endocrinology, immunology, infectious disease, inflammation, neurology, oncology, psychiatry, rare disease, respiratory, and vaccines.

Quality Landscape Evaluations & Strategy Recommendations

Discern has conducted quality landscape evaluation and strategy projects for many leading life sciences companies. The projects have included environmental scans to understand current guidelines and clinical practices, relevant measures, and non-measure quality tactics; assessments of evidence, performance, measure, and quality tactic gaps; expert interviews to validate findings and brainstorm ideas on how to close gaps; and development of strategy recommendations to improve care and treatment.

Quality Measure Development Strategy & Implementation

For a life sciences client, Discern evaluated evidence, guidelines, and performance gaps to support identification of priority process and outcome quality measures for development and future implementation; facilitated a partnership with a measure developer; engaged a measure development facilitator to incorporate a patient-reported measure into its development and testing pipeline; piloted a patient-centered specialty practice transformation and simultaneously pilot-tested the prioritized process quality measures; and provided quality measurement and patient-centered care transformation expertise.

Regional Quality Performance Visualization

Discern supported a life sciences client by examining overall national health plan performance, variation by state, and variation by plan for select measures for commercial and Medicaid health plans. In addition, Discern calculated a series of customized composite measures to summarize performance at the state and plan level, performed a comparative analysis of prioritized states and plans, and created a data visualization mapping tool to support a life sciences company's internal strategy development and discussions with customers.

Health System-Level Dashboards on Revenue, Risk Assumption & Quality Performance

To guide market segmentation efforts, Discern aggregated data from 14 distinct data sources and created health system–level dashboards for 300 health systems across the country. Discern identified health system components and estimated the percentage of revenue gained through risk-based contracts. More than 30 cross-cutting and clinical area–relevant quality measures were also identified, and a customized quality composite score was created to summarize all measures.

Quality Landscape Education for Advocacy Partners

Based on learnings from a landscape evaluation and strategy project, Discern created and delivered educational content for advocacy groups to inform and educate them on the quality landscape, gaps in care, and opportunities to include patients' voices in quality-related activities.

Internal Quality Coordination & Education Support

For several life sciences companies, Discern has supported internal quality coordination and education efforts by tracking emerging issues in quality; developing content and co-hosting quality committee meetings; developing comment letters regarding emerging regulations; and creating issue briefs, newsletters, and presentations for staff education.

Quality Improvement Initiative Partnership & Development

Discern supported a partnership between a pharmaceutical company and a large community physician practice, including its specialty pharmacy. The partnership was aimed at identifying quality improvement opportunities to enhance coordination of prescribing for patients. To identify gaps in workflow and quality improvement opportunities relevant to oral drug prescribing, Discern conducted site visits to observe and evaluate clinical practice activities, patient education, and quality measurement.

Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Improvement Activity (IA) Development & Submission for CMS Quality Payment Program

Discern has worked with several life science companies to assess existing IAs relevant to specific therapeutic conditions and to select new IA concepts for development. In addition, Discern facilitated partnerships between life science companies and professional societies, worked with those partners to develop new IAs, and helped to submit documentation forms for CMS consideration.

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