Hint Health Core

by Chief Operating Officer (formerly CTO)

Patient Billing and Collection

Details

Review Date	11/30/2023
Purchase Date	Q2'16
Implementation Time	N/A
Product Still in Use	Yes
Purchase Amount	PMPM + payment processing fee
Intent to Renew	100%
Review Source	Elion

Product Rating

Product Overall		5.0
Use Case Fit		5.0
Ease of Use		4.0
API		5.0
Integrations		5.0
Support		5.0
Value		5.0

About the Reviewer

Purchasing Team   Implementation Team

Product Oversight

Reviewer Organization

Primary Care Clinic   Primary Care

Reviewer Tech Stack

Salesforce   athenahealth

Other Products Considered

N/A

Summary

- **Product Usage: Hint Health manages all aspects of membership billing for a concierge medical service.**

- **Strengths: Hint Health's strength lies in its flexibility to cater to complex subscription types in healthcare and robust API for integration; strong in-house support adds extra value.**

- **Weaknesses: The service could potentially be more beneficial if the practice used all its features, such as the ones catered to Direct Primary Care practices, which are slightly different from concierge services.**

- **Overall Judgment: This product has been an excellent fit for the company's needs, with reliable functionality and responsive support, making it superior to previous platforms used by the company (Zuora, Quickbooks).**

So today we're chatting about Hint Health and how it's used at your company. Before we jump into that, could you give a brief overview of the company and your role there?

We are a primary care provider using a concierge model. Our patients pay a membership fee for non-covered clinical services, and we have other value-added services around health and wellness as well. We are active in four states with about 32 providers. I'm the Chief Operating Officer; I joined as the Chief Technology Officer and then took on the operations role a few years later.

What core business needs were you looking to solve with a product like Hint Health?

Our primary care practice operates on a concierge model, so we charge a membership fee in addition to generating revenue from medical services. All of our membership fees are managed through Hint Health. So, we needed a system to manage the membership billing and accounting. At the time we were on Zuora, which is a subscription management system, but focuses more on very transactional type subscriptions. Since our business involves a much higher touch relationship with our customers, requiring more complex membership types, and more involved accounting we knew we needed a system that was more focused on the healthcare space.

What core requirements were you looking for in a tool like this?

At the time, we needed a tool that could effectively handle consumer-based memberships more specifically looking for a solution tailored to membership medicine that provided the level of flexibility to create pricing plans to suit our needs as well as both the financial and management reporting to support our business. We'd previously used Zuora, but that didn't work for us—it was designed more for widget-style product-based subscriptions, not for the types of transactions we handle.

Did you consider any other vendors, and how did they compare?

We used Zuora, but that was very cumbersome for our needs; it simply wasn't meant for the types of transactions we were doing. Before Zuora, we used QuickBooks, but that involved a lot of manual processes. When we transitioned to Hint Health, there really weren't any other viable options in the market offering membership billing for practices like ours. Essentially, Hint Health was the only solution available.

What ultimately led to your decision to move away from Zuora?

It was driven by both product issues and a lack of partnership. They treated us more like a "number" than a partner and were quite challenging to work with. We felt like a small fish to them—they service very large companies with thousands of subscriptions, so we didn't get the attention we needed.

Hint Health, on the other hand, offers a more personalized service suitable for our members. Zuora is geared towards managing large volumes of lower-priced, widget-based subscriptions, and it just wasn't the right fit for our membership base. Hint Health fits better with our model of selling higher-value memberships that require more consideration in both management and accounting.

Ultimately, Zuora was just the wrong product for us, with fundamental differences in how we needed to manage and account for our memberships. The (Zoura) implementation dragged on for a long time; support was hard to obtain, and we often had to escalate issues, so it was not the best relationship.

Since you first started working with Hint Health, have you re-evaluated the market for similar solutions?

We've been really happy with Hint Health, so we haven't looked elsewhere since we joined forces with them. When we first partnered with Hint Health, they were in the early stages of their business cycle, and we were their largest customer at the time. They had a good portion of the functionality we needed, but there were several features specific to our business that were missing. We got started with the base functionality, but we worked with Hint Health over the following two years to develop and implement additional features.

The base product was already a significant improvement over our previous system, but the selling point for us was their willingness to listen to us and make changes to meet our needs. This collaboration was mutually beneficial: our input helped Hint Health enhance its product for the concierge medicine sector; and we got a solution that addressed our pain points. While they were already strong in the direct primary care (DPC) space, which shares many membership billing requirements with concierge medicine, our requirements ultimately helped them refine and expand their functionality.

Which use cases does Hint Health support for your practice today?

Hint Health handles the management of all our memberships from a billing perspective. Our patients can update their credit cards in their system, and our billing staff use it constantly. Our sales and practice manager teams use Hint Health through our Salesforce integration. This setup provides them with invoices and billing information, so when they're talking with members, they've got all the information at their fingertips.

Hint Health does everything from monthly to annual billing and takes care of our revenue recognition. It also facilitates any price increases we have. We work with them to partially automate these price increases for our services.

It's really our core membership billing system, so all things related to accounting are handled in Hint Health. It's the central system for our membership revenue. We have multiple revenue streams within our business; alongside membership billing, there's revenue from medical services, which is processed through Athenahealth. We have other sources like pay-for-performance and various miscellaneous revenues. However, all membership billing is conducted through Hint Health. We then extract summary-level data from Hint Health that feeds into our general ledger, which is in Sage Intacct.

How long have you been using the Hint Health platform?

I believe we first implemented Hint Health in July 2016.

What is your pricing structure like?

We pay on a per-member per-month (PMPM) basis, which is tiered, plus processing fees.

What do you see as the key strengths and weaknesses of the Hint Health product?

I think one of Hint Health's major strengths is the team's ability to innovate within the platform. They continue to look for ways to add functionality that reduces our workload. Their team has been extremely helpful in spending time with us to look at our workflow and make recommendations about how best to leverage their platform.

Which of Hint Health's features are you not currently using?

One key area to consider is the difference in functionality required by direct primary care (DPC) practices compared to concierge services like ours. DPC practices tend to rely more heavily on employer-paid memberships, and Hint Health has a comprehensive set of features tailored to that. Although we've only begun to tap into this for our corporate contracts, fully leveraging this aspect of Hint Health could be quite beneficial.

The DPC model generally includes memberships that cover all services, and they might offer additional products beyond membership. Hint Health has capabilities designed to support this DPC model, but many of these don't apply to our concierge model.

How reliable and stable has Hint Health been for your practice?

I can't recall any outages that have affected our business, so it's been highly reliable.

How have you built on and integrated Hint Health with the rest of your tech stack, and what has that integration experience been like?

It's probably more about what we still need to do rather than what we've done at this point. We currently have an integration between Salesforce and Hint Health. There are two main integration points between the two products. At the contact level in Salesforce, we have a Visualforce component that displays key membership and billing information, as well as links to invoices. This setup means our Salesforce users don't need Hint Health IDs to access membership data—it's available right through the Salesforce user interface.

We also have an integration at the front end of the sales cycle. Once a deal is closed, we have an integration that enables our billers to transfer contact information from Salesforce into Hint Health. It automatically creates a new member in Hint Health, associates them with the appropriate department, and sets them up. This integration helps to minimize manual/duplicate data entry.

There are two other integrations we need to work on but just haven't had the time to address yet. One is with Athenahealth, which is crucial for us to access some of Hint Health's broader capabilities. Currently, we rely on Salesforce as the common link between Athenahealth and Hint Health. We reference both the Hint Health ID and the Athenahealth ID within Salesforce. There's specific functionality within Hint Health that we're looking to leverage, but it requires Hint Health to be aware of the corresponding Athenahealth patient record for a member. Integrating Athena with Hint Health will enable that.

We're planning to tackle that integration in 2024, as that's more important to us.

They also have a tighter integration with Salesforce, which we need to decide whether to integrate.

Are the upcoming integrations you mentioned with Athena and Salesforce out-of-the-box solutions that Hint Health offers?

Yes, they are integrations that Hint Health will support and implement for you. The integrations we currently have with Salesforce are actually ones that I've built using their robust APIs and endpoints. This allows for custom solutions like

what we're doing in Salesforce. However, the more sophisticated and tighter integrations with Athena and Salesforce are solutions built by the Hint Health team.

What was your experience with Hint Health's initial sales and implementation process?

It was a very collaborative process. Their technical team and their founder were heavily involved in our integration; they sat down with us to understand our objectives and how Hint Health could fulfill our needs. We mapped out the transition from our previous system, and they handled a significant amount of data extraction from Zuora to pull the data into their system.

Once we'd mapped out what we needed to do, Hint Health worked with our finance team to set up the necessary structures within Hint Health, such as products and rate plans. They worked with us on how to configure the system to meet our specific needs at the time.

For us, it wasn't an enormous amount of work, although our finance team did have to put in some effort to work with Hint Health on configuring products that were new to Hint Health. From a pure data perspective, though, much of that burden was managed by Hint Health.

After the collaborative setup, we went live with Hint Health incrementally over several weeks. It was a phased implementation, tackling it location by location in alignment with our billing cycles. Over the next year or so, we continued to work with Hint Health to develop and incorporate new features and functionalities not included in the initial release.

What has your experience been like with the support and account management at Hint Health?

They've been very supportive. We have regular meetings with our point person from Hint Health, who is very good. Generally, the system meets our needs, but during periods like price increases, which require a bit more effort due to the way we target specific patient subsets, their team becomes heavily involved. They take on a significant portion of the work and provide considerable back-end support for these initiatives. They've been very good from an ongoing account management perspective.

Our controller handles most interactions with them on a routine basis, while I join the calls every couple of months. I also have a good relationship with their founder; we talk once or twice a year about more forward-looking aspects and strategic initiatives, rather than the day-to-day tactical operations, which are managed by our controller.

Looking back, do you feel you made the right decision by choosing Hint Health?

Yes, absolutely.

Are there any areas for growth that you'd highlight for the team at Hint Health?

I think the areas for growth are more on our end than on Hint Health's. I feel it's more a case of us adapting to the platform's current capabilities than the platform itself needing to evolve.

Do you have any advice for those looking for a membership payment solution, whether in concierge medicine or DPC?

When selecting a core business system like a membership payment solution, it's crucial to choose a partner, not just a product. While the product must meet your needs from a functionality perspective, you want to assess the quality of support that the vendor supplies to its customers. I would also look at their roadmap to ensure their vision for innovation aligns with the direction you want your business to go. This isn't just specific to Hint Health; it applies to any platform you're considering.

Do you have any advice regarding how best to implement a solution like Hint Health?

As you reach the implementation stage, be thoughtful about both your current and your future needs, and invest ample time in the initial configuration and system architecture to ensure you can fully leverage the platform's capabilities in the long term.