

7 Questions with Mallory Franklin, Chief Clinical Officer of Nutrimey



Mallory Franklin,
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What is Nutrimey and what makes your solution unique to the market?

Nutrimey is a digital therapeutic companion that combines automation with personalization to deliver evidence-based clinical nutrition care to patients with the support and guidance of virtual dietitians. As dietitians ourselves, we designed Nutrimey with dietitians in mind. Our platform helps facilitate nutrition care by creating efficient ways to collect and analyze information about the patients, allowing the dietitian to focus more on the patient's unique needs and challenges. So much of nutrition counseling is about personalization, with Nutrimey, we are able to do that. Now more than ever we see the value of being able to provide care using virtual models and for many individuals distance and lack of transportation are a huge barrier.

What are the challenges to increasing access to nutrition care?

There are several reasons someone might not see a dietitian when it could otherwise help them manage their condition.

First off, dietitians tend to be understaffed and mostly work in inpatient settings, making it hard for patients to have continual access to a nutrition specialist during their care journey.

Second, outside of diabetes and renal disease, nutrition counseling is not always reimbursed for chronic diseases such as cancer and heart failure.

Lastly, increasing awareness among healthcare providers that nutrition is an essential factor to their patients' care and that they would benefit from working with a dietitian would mean that more patients will get the care they need.

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- Mallory Franklin, Chief Clinical Officer, Nutrimey

How does Nutrimey address these challenges?

We have worked hard to advocate for dietitians and nutrition services. We have an extensive network of over 1500 dietitians on our platform who are willing and eager to work with patients. We are forging connections between the need for nutrition care and access to these nutrition experts. We are also working closely with physicians and other clinical team members to close this gap in care.

In June 2020, Nutrimedyl benefited from a [MassDigitalHealth Sandbox grant](#) that allowed the company to work with [TechSpring](#), Baystate Health's innovation center in Springfield. How was it working with a facility like that?

TechSpring was fantastic, they had a deep understanding of our mission and service and aligned us with the right clinical champions at Baystate. We worked with two surgical oncologists who knew first-hand the challenges of malnutrition in their practice. They were struggling to provide minimal nutrition guidance and explain the importance of eating well to their patients.

Briefly, can you describe the project you did with TechSpring?

At Baystate, patients do not typically have access to a dietitian until after their surgery when they are inpatient. Yet many patients are at risk of malnutrition prior to surgery, making them more likely to suffer complications such as infection or slow rates of healing. We designed a program in which patients received support from a registered dietitian on the Nutrimedyl platform for four to twelve weeks leading up to surgery. Each patient had unlimited access to the platform and its features, and they were allotted four video sessions with our dietitian.

What did Nutrimedyl learn from running this pilot?

As digital solutions become more and more prevalent, we need to have a better understanding of how they can integrate with current care pathways and if patients will use them. We found the most successful way to get patients to engage was by guiding them through registration while they were in the clinic. Once they were set up on the platform we saw 73% use it.

We often hear concerns about older populations not being able to use digital tools. This was not our experience. The average age of the patients in our pilot was 68 and the ages ranged from 48 to 83 years old. Our solution also differs from other digital offerings because it connected patients to a person. Many of the patients shared their feelings of trust in their dietitian and overall felt more supported, positive, and in control of their treatment, something you don't get from a purely digital tool. It's not every day that someone tells you that your program was the highlight of their cancer journey and this study really reaffirmed our mission

How did this project help accelerate the growth of your company and where is Nutrimedyl going next?

This was our first opportunity to work in oncology and since we had such fantastic feedback and adoption of the service we have been able to share these insights with potential partners. We are expanding our services into not only clinical practice, but clinical trials to address malnutrition concerns of study participants, and with pharmaceutical partners to address cost-prohibiting access to nutrition care.

Learn more about Nutrimedyl by visiting nutrimedyl.com.

Learn more about [TechSpring at Baystate Health](#).