

# Avenu Health

*A glimpse into the rapidly evolving landscape of Direct Primary Care*

Rachel Hines, MD/MPH  
UNC DFM Class of 2016



# What is Direct Primary Care?

- » Direct to consumer billing – no insurance engaged for primary care services
- » Fee per person, not per service. Like a budget/capitated.
- » Different from concierge based on price point and no insurance billing. Similar in better patient experience
- » Typical patient panel is 400-800 patients rather than thousands for a full time physician

# DPC Advantages

- » Incentives aligned around cost saving and preserving wellness
- » Patient experience is much better
- » Physician satisfaction
- » Opens door for use of technology, non-traditional interactions

# A brief timeline

- » Jun 2017: Ben Aiken recruited by Mission to develop innovation clinic
- » Jan 2018: First patients seen
- » Mar 2018: Avenu grand opening, HCA takeover announced
- » Aug 2018: about 80 members
- » Jan 2019: HCA takeover
- » Oct 2019: 310ish members

# Our space



# Our team

- » 2 MDs (both with public health training) – UNC SOM Class of 2013!
- » 1 RN who is trained as a health coach
- » Previously had a Program Coordinator

# Basic structure

- » **Comprehensive plan:** \$69/month for individual, less for additional family members or people under 26, \$59 for employees
  - Unlimited virtual interactions with MDs or health coach via Spruce
  - Unlimited office visits
  - Specified labs
  - Up to 5 x-rays
  - Negotiated pricing for other referrals
- » **Select plan:** \$35/month per person, not available to businesses
  - Unlimited virtual interactions
  - 1 annual preventive visit
  - Discounted “co-pay” for additional visits, labs, imaging

# Virtual care with Spruce: our bread and butter

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL `app.sprucehealth.com/org/entity_0NOR41K1G3800/thread/t_0QB03OUK05G00`. The interface is for a user named Kunal Ztest. On the left is a navigation sidebar for AVENU HEALTH with options: Inbox (17), Hines (5), Aiken (9), Team, Pages (7), Starred, and Archived. The main content area shows a thread with the following items:

- A yellow banner at the top with the text "@ Page Resolved" and a checkmark icon.
- A post by Elieth Fox, Program Coordinator, dated 12/29/17, with the text "Shared a visit:". Below this is a blue card titled "Travel Advice" with a "View Visit" link and a medical icon.
- A grey banner with the text "Completed a visit: Travel Advice" and the date 12/29/17.
- A post by Kunal Ztest, dated 12/29/17, with the text "Hey thanks for the appointment I'm already feeling great!".
- A post by Kunal Ztest, dated 12/29/17, with the text "Hello again!".

At the bottom of the thread, there are tabs for "Secure" and "Internal", with "Internal" selected. Below the tabs is a text input field labeled "Post internal note...". At the bottom right of the input area is a "Post" button. The Windows taskbar is visible at the very bottom, showing various application icons and system status information like 80% battery and 9:58 AM on 10/3/2019.



# Clinical successes

- » Patient stories: Reversing T2DM, early identification of htn, likely familial colon cancer syndrome, multiple first pap smears, dozens of urgent care visits avoided for lacerations, injuries, UTIs, etc on weekends and after hours
- » DPC victories: prenatal care, childhood vaccines, LARC
- » Operational flexibility: virtual interaction, home visits, 60-90 minute initial appointments, lunch n learns, personal carve outs, responses to work site health concerns

# What's next for us?

- » Improving growth rate
- » Navigating being part of an (even bigger) system
- » Revisiting overhead spend
- » Community partnerships
- » Strengthening local DPC “coalition”

# What's next for DPC nationally?

- » Medicare and/or Medicaid payments
- » Use of HSAs, HRAs
- » Forward thinking insurance plans and/or health shares
- » Networks of local DPC practices to enhance progress
- » Social networks and how-to manuals for the “DPC curious” among you
- » DPC Alliance for national advocacy
- » AAFP attention (Nuts and Bolts conference, etc)

Stay tuned...

# Questions

**Thank you!**

[www.avenuhealth.com](http://www.avenuhealth.com)

<https://dpcalliance.org/>

