



Just what the doctor ordered: AT&T IoT connectivity

- **Business needs** - A way to help patients more easily use their smart health equipment
- **Networking solution** - The me.health hub is designed to connect automatically with patient medical devices and send important data to their healthcare providers.
- **Business value** - Better adherence to medical treatment plans lessens the need for repeat hospitalizations; ability for medical providers to capture additional revenue using the CMS Remote Patient Monitoring reimbursement codes
- **Industry focus** - Home healthcare technology
- **Size** - 1 million+ devices in use in the market

About My Everyday Health

My Everyday Health – or [me.health](#) – was founded to improve home healthcare by enabling patients to use medical devices such as blood pressure monitors and weight scales more easily. The company is a joint venture of Greater Goods and its overseas manufacturing partner. Greater Goods and me.health give people essential tools for a healthier life.

The situation

During the COVID pandemic, many doctors began prescribing medical monitoring devices for their acute, chronic patients. Some patients had a difficult time connecting the devices to their home Wi-Fi, cellphone, or tablet computer. Me.health designed a Bluetooth cellular hub that would efficiently connect patients' medical equipment and upload vital signs to healthcare providers. It needed a connectivity provider with Internet of Things (IoT) expertise to facilitate the secure transfer of patient medical information.

Solution

AT&T Business connects the me.health hub securely and cost-effectively with its reliable LTE-M network. The low-power wide-area technology supports me.health devices. The solution makes it easy for patients to have clear instructions of their doctor's orders and enables medical professionals to diligently monitor their patients. It also documents patient compliance, enabling medical providers to be compensated for their services.

“AT&T technology has been a great simplifier for us in terms of allowing patients to simply use their devices like they normally would, and the data automatically flows to the provider.”

Bryan Potter
Vice President/Product Development, me.health



Simplified doctor-patient interactions

My Everyday Health, or me.health, was created by Greater Goods on the belief that the best healthcare takes each patient's everyday life into consideration. Greater Goods CEO Chris Chupp said patients need high-quality devices that are easy to use and transmit patient data to healthcare providers seamlessly and securely.

“We began getting lots of requests for solutions to provide smart products in the healthcare space,” Chupp said. “So that's why we started me.health.”

The company works to simplify interactions between patients and their devices. Its goal is to transform healthcare from an episodic to an everyday occurrence.

New paths to healthy outcomes

Like many who work in healthcare and related industries, Chupp is convinced that economic and social conditions can dramatically affect the health status of each person. “Patient health outcomes are really determined by what they do in and out of their homes, along with the ability of doctors and other providers to influence healthy outcomes,” he said. But treating chronic conditions with episodic visits to the doctor may not produce optimal results.

Me.health set out to create technology to help providers extend their care beyond the model of periodic visits. The timing could not have been better. As COVID-19 spread across the globe and patients couldn't meet their healthcare providers in person, many physicians began relying heavily on remote patient monitoring.

To track the health status of their patients, doctors often rely on medical devices to monitor patients with chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes. Giving them equipment like blood pressure cuffs or glucose monitors has the potential to help many patients, especially those in rural areas where there are few healthcare specialists.

An easy way to follow doctors' orders

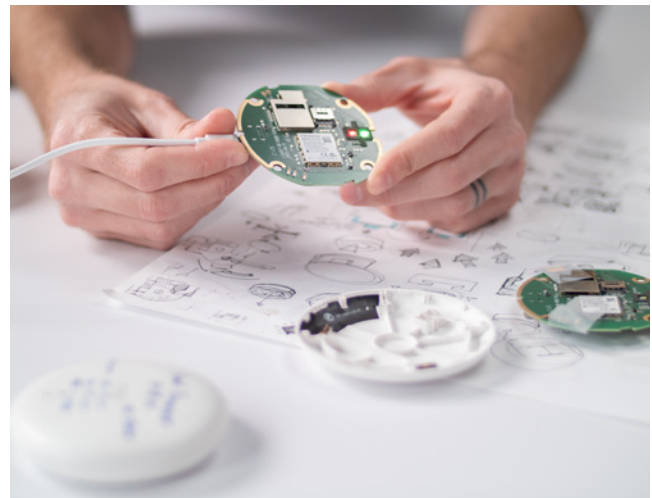
However, me.health Vice President for Product Development Bryan Potter says that some patients were unable to use the devices. Problems can arise when they don't understand how to use the equipment. It can be especially difficult if they have to pair the device with a phone or Wi-Fi network to send their vital signs to healthcare providers.

"A lot of the patient populations that require monitoring don't have access to the technology or they don't understand the technology," he said.

"Bluetooth devices would traditionally be paired with a phone," Potter said. Me.health wanted to make it easy for patients to use the healthcare devices their doctors ordered.

Better adherence to treatment plans

Me.health developed a small device that the company expects to transform home health monitoring. The company's Bluetooth cellular hub pairs automatically with patient medical devices. "The hub actually collects the readings and syncs them with without any patient interaction," Potter said.



The hubs are easy to use. "There's no setup. All the patient has to do is plug the hub into a power outlet and that's it – everything is ready to go," he said. "And then they just use their devices as they normally would."

Healthcare outcomes depend upon a patient's adherence to recommended treatment regimens. Chupp said the me.health hub is making it easier for their patients to adhere to treatment plans.

"As soon as you require an extra device or an extra step, adherence goes way down because the solution becomes a lot more complicated," he said. "Our devices are helping solve the problem of adherence because we are taking out the setup step that's required to get data to the provider."

Advantages for medical providers

Potter says that this adherence makes it easier for medical providers to collect for the services they provide. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will compensate providers for remote patient monitoring only if physician can document at least 16 days worth of patient data in a 30-day period.

Until now many patients have been unable to use their devices at least 16 days of the month, especially if their providers require them to pair their medical equipment with a cellphone or tablet computer. “Having another device to manage can cause problems,” Potter said. “Patients may not understand the technology or realize that they have to open an app on the tablet for it to transmit their blood pressure reading.”

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Chris Chupp
CEO, Greater Goods

This can lead to patient frustration and decrease the amount of data being sent to medical providers. “If providers don’t receive that data for at least 16 days, they are not reimbursed at all,” he said.

The me.health hub lets patients use their monitors without worrying about any pairing. The hub automatically collects the data and sends it to the provider, allowing the providers to be paid for their services.

Better coverage at a lower cost

Me.health relies on AT&T Business to support the elegant simplicity of its device. “AT&T and its Internet of Things network helped us get this into the patient’s home in a very seamless way,” Chupp said. The me.health

Bluetooth cellular hub uses the AT&T LTE-M Network, which provides a cost-effective way for me.health to deploy its hubs.

“Our hub offers better coverage and a lower cost than traditional LTE devices and is more secure than a Wi-Fi connection,” Chupp said. “The AT&T LTE-M network creates an easy experience for the end user. There’s no Wi-Fi or Bluetooth configuration, which makes the technology seamless for our patient population.”

The low-power wide-area technology is ideal for medical device devices. It uses Bluetooth 5 to deliver four times the range and two times the speed of Bluetooth 4 devices, supporting me.health hubs even in challenging environments.

Technology is a great simplifier

The hubs arrive preconfigured at each patient’s home. They simply plug the device into an electrical outlet. There’s no additional setup so no technical knowledge is required. Thanks to the hub’s firmware-over-the-air capabilities, new devices pair seamlessly when they arrive.

“AT&T technology has been a great simplifier for us in terms of allowing patients to simply use their devices like they normally would,” Chupp said. “The data automatically flows to the provider. We’re linking the provider and the user more seamlessly.”

Potter noted that the solution has removed the big stumbling blocks that had kept some patients from using their devices and helped the company grow. “The IoT network from AT&T Business has allowed us to expand our footprint, and that’s been a huge advantage for us.”

Creative health solutions

Me.health has quickly made a name for itself in the healthcare marketplace, distributing more than a million connected devices so far. Officials are quick to mention the role AT&T Business has played in the company's growth.

"A big part of the relationship to this point has been technical enablement," Chupp said. The me.health team has demonstrated expertise in designing products, but found crafting a network strategy and connecting the product in the market more difficult. "That's been a huge part of the support that we've gotten from AT&T Business."

Potter said AT&T Business has also helped make the me.health hub available to people with modest incomes. "Cost plays a big piece in this. The patient populations that we support are typically lower income. There are other cell service providers out there, but they're far too expensive," he said.

"I think the cost has been something that really allows us to explore what we can do on a cellular network. We're not as constrained as we would be if we were paying a higher price, and it allows us to be more creative in our solutions," he added.

Driving better patient outcomes

One of the solutions under development at me.health is a unique wearable that supports the medical community's efforts to prevent rehospitalization of acute care patients. Chupp said the initiative is a priority since repeat hospitalizations are significant drivers of healthcare costs. "Doctors want to keep

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a close eye on how patients are doing when they transition from the hospital to some sort of home health care," he said.

The device is charged by a removable "nightcap," so patients never have to take off the device to charge it. This enables the device to deliver medical readings of patients every 15 minutes around the clock, Potter said. "The device can take readings that are really beneficial but easier to grab at night. AT&T is playing a very large role on that because it provides the cellular connectivity for the device."

Other products in development are a cellular blood pressure monitor and a cellular "backpack" that works with a non-connected blood glucose meter, changing it from a non-connected device to a cellular device. "Again," Potter said, "this is something that we were able to develop because of the cellular technology that AT&T has provided us."

Me.health devices are earning the gratitude of patients and getting outstanding ratings from medical reviewers at leading newspapers and healthcare publications. Company officials believe the me.health hub, connected by the AT&T LTE-M network, will be used to connect a number of new solutions that will continue to drive better patient outcomes.