

# Hackensack Meridian Health Funds Key Innovation to Improve Health Care in New Jersey

Pillo, a medical hub for the home, is the first health care innovation supported by network's \$25 million Innovation Center fund to improve patient experience and care while reducing costs



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**Hackensack Meridian Health**  
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EDISON, N.J., June 14, 2018 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Hackensack Meridian *Health*, New Jersey's most comprehensive and integrated health care network, is pleased to announce that it has invested in a medical hub for the home. Pillo, an intelligent health care companion, empowers patients to better manage their health at home while connecting them to caregivers and family members. This is the first product funded through the network's \$25 million innovation program to support the improvement of health care delivery.



## Pillo Health

"We are excited to invest in Pillo Health and to support the development of the Pillo in-home care companion technology," said Robert C. Garrett, co-CEO of Hackensack Meridian *Health*. "We see this as a landmark moment for Hackensack Meridian *Health* and for our commitment to leveraging innovation to improve the lives of our patients and countless others."

Boston-based Pillo Health, a leading in-home digital care management company, created Pillo to serve as a medical hub in the home. Pillo leverages voice-first technology and artificial intelligence to connect patients at home with their care teams and family members.

"Innovation is in our DNA at Hackensack Meridian *Health*," said Andrew Pecora, M.D., president of physician enterprise and chief innovation officer. "This first project funded less than a year after launching our ideation center is a major achievement to improve health care."

Sitting on a table or countertop, the voice- and video-enabled Pillo device reminds people to take medication at the appropriate time, dispenses their medications, digitally coordinates prescription refills and connects individuals in their homes with physicians, caregivers and loved ones. For example, Pillo can alert a family member if an elderly relative misses a medication dose. Pillo can also connect a patient or family member with a physician via videoconference and provide an on-screen display of essential medical data as obtained from the patient's electronic medical record.

"The Pillo Health team has tremendous respect for Hackensack Meridian *Health* and for its commitment to innovation," said James Wyman, Pillo Health co-founder and COO. "We're

excited to engage with experts at Hackensack Meridian *Health* to revolutionize the way health care is coordinated, managed and delivered in patients' homes."

Hackensack Meridian *Health* joined with the New Jersey Innovation Institute, an affiliate of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, bringing together engineers, scientists, health care experts and others to launch innovations to improve health care delivery. Hackensack Meridian created an Innovation Center where aspiring companies present their concepts to the center's ideation group. Those deemed ready are presented to the "Bear's Den" group of Hackensack Meridian's Innovation Center to decide on investment.

The health network's novel incubator has vetted many products and strategies to streamline care delivery, reduce infections, lower hospital readmissions and help patients partner in their care with physicians.

The best ideas have reached the Bear's Den, a panel of experts headed by Dr. Pecora and including venture capitalists, a patent attorney, medical and financial experts, and Hackensack Meridian *Health* Co-CEOs Robert C. Garrett and John K. Lloyd. Through investments from the \$25 million fund, the network will help bring exceptional innovations to market.

Together, the Pillo Health team and experts from Hackensack Meridian *Health* will now look to identify novel use cases for the technology within the hospital system and develop a pilot and commercialization road map to bring Pillo to market.

One of Pillo Health's primary goals is to support improvements in medication compliance. Prescription noncompliance adds a huge financial burden to the U.S. healthcare system, costing billions of dollars per year, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hospital admission rates increase for non-adherent patients with chronic illness by up to 69 percent, according to the CDC.

Increasingly, healthcare organizations are turning to technology to help achieve the "Triple Aim": to improve patient outcomes, enhance the patient experience and reduce costs. While U.S. healthcare spending has grown from five percent of GDP in 1960 to 17 percent in 2016, life expectancy in the U.S. has decreased in the last two years for the first time since the great flu epidemic from 1916 to 1918.

Hackensack Meridian *Health* is a leader in improving the quality of health care while lowering costs. For example, one of our ACO's is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation with an exceptional quality score of 92 and savings of \$50 million in 2016. Through advances in technology and enhanced care coordination, the ACO decreased emergency visits by 33 percent, hospital readmissions by 47 percent and days in skilled nursing facilities by 39 percent two years ago.

#### **ABOUT HACKENSACK MERIDIAN HEALTH**

Hackensack Meridian *Health* is a leading not-for-profit health care organization that is the most comprehensive and truly integrated health care network in New Jersey, offering a complete range of medical services, innovative research and life-enhancing care. Hackensack Meridian *Health* comprises 16 hospitals from Bergen to Ocean counties, which includes three

academic medical centers – Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune, JFK Medical Center in Edison; two children's hospitals - Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital in Hackensack, K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital in Neptune; 11 community hospitals - Ocean Medical Center in Brick, Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank, Mountainside Medical Center in Montclair, Palisades Medical Center in North Bergen, Raritan Bay Medical Center in Perth Amboy, Southern Ocean Medical Center in Manahawkin, Bayshore Medical Center in Holmdel, Raritan Bay Medical Center in Old Bridge, and Pascack Valley Medical Center in Westwood, JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute in Edison and Shore Rehabilitation Institute in Brick.

Additionally, the network has more than 180 patient care locations throughout the state which include ambulatory care centers, surgery centers, home health services, long-term care and assisted living communities, ambulance services, lifesaving air medical transportation, fitness and wellness centers, rehabilitation centers, and urgent care and after-hours centers. Hackensack Meridian *Health* has 33,000 team members, and 6,500 physicians and is a distinguished leader in health care philanthropy, committed to the health and well-being of the communities it serves.

The Network's notable distinctions include having one of only five major academic medical centers in the nation to receive Healthgrades America's 50 Best Hospitals Award for five or more consecutive years, four hospitals among the top 10 in New Jersey, including Hackensack University Medical Center which is ranked No. 1 by *U.S. News and World Report*. Other honors include consistently achieving Magnet® recognition for nursing excellence from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, recipient of the John M. Eisenberg Award for Patient Safety and Quality from The Joint Commission and the National Quality Forum, a six-time recipient of Fortune's "100 Best Companies to Work For," one of the "20 Best Workplaces in Health Care" in the nation, and the number one "Best Place to Work for Women." Hackensack Meridian Health is a member of AllSpire Health Partners, an interstate consortium of leading health systems, to focus on the sharing of best practices in clinical care and achieving efficiencies.

For additional information, please visit [www.HackensackMeridianHealth.org](http://www.HackensackMeridianHealth.org).

**About the Pillo Health Platform and the Pillo Device - [www.pillohealth.com](http://www.pillohealth.com)**

Boston-based Pillo Health offers an in-home digital care management platform that provides personalized care for adults with chronic conditions seeking to live healthier, more independent lives. Built exclusively for healthcare, the Pillo device is a companion robot that leverages voice-first technology, facial recognition, and artificial intelligence to proactively engage users. Pillo provides medication management, care plan delivery, conversational interactions, and video check-ins with caregivers and family members. Pillo Health is bringing healthcare into the home.

SOURCE Hackensack Meridian Health