

Blue Cross of CA pilots wireless scales for CHF

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Anthem Blue Cross, the trade name for Blue Cross of California, announced plans last week to work with wireless health company Ideal Life on a pilot program for congestive heart failure (CHF) patients called CARE (Congestive Heart Failure Ambulatory Remote monitoring and Engagement). Ideal Life is providing its wireless body weight scales for in-home use in an effort to leverage remote monitoring devices to more efficiently triage members with chronic heart conditions, while identifying patients at risk for a possible acute health crisis. The program also aims to prevent costly and unnecessary emergency room visits and hospitalizations. Anthem Blue Cross plans to deploy the remote monitoring devices through participating HMO medical groups and independent practice associations.

Ideal Life's remote monitoring system transmits a patient's biometric data via Bluetooth their home hub gateway, the Ideal Life Pod, and then through a standard telephone line to a secure online data repository.

Ideal Life's Bluetooth-enabled body weight scale will enable care workers to intervene when patients experience a sudden increase in body weight, which often leads to hospitalization for heart failure.

Last May, Ideal Life announced findings from a study they conducted using their weight scale to help prevent CHF:

"The 200 patients in the study, all of whom were age 65 or older, simply stepped on the wireless, Bluetooth-enabled IDEAL LIFE Body Manager™ scale each day. The scale automatically sent weight readings to the data center where the information was logged, analyzed, and readily accessed by their health care team. If weight fluctuations were recorded, a healthcare professional could immediately intervene, avoiding a potential health crisis that would otherwise require a visit to the emergency room or re-hospitalization. IDEAL LIFE's ease of use played a key role in the successful results, producing a high compliance rate of 99.5 percent. This compared to a 65 percent compliance rate for a sample of 217 patients who used another system that required them to self-record weight readings through the telephone."

Ideal Life concluded that "the savings achieved by avoiding expensive hospitalizations through remote health monitoring delivered a 7:1 return on investment." Looks like the study may have convinced Anthem Blue Cross of California.

<http://mobihealthnews.com/6022/blue-cross-of-ca-pilots-wireless-scales-for-chf/>