

# SIMPLIFYING HEALTH CARE: BETTER TOOLS FOR DECISION MAKING



BY SUSAN BURNELL

**T**echnology is making it possible for consumers to access their health care information with a click, a tap or a voice command. Health plans have begun to release mobile applications and interactive tools designed to help insured individuals manage and monitor their health and benefits better.

The full-featured Aetna Mobile application for iPhone® and Android™ devices was rolled out in 2010. It is already simplifying health care choices for employees.

## Empowering Smart Health Care Choices

“We are committed to putting the power of health in people’s hands,” says Meg McCabe, vice president for consumer experience and product. “The goal is to have as much information available at someone’s fingertips at the point where it matters most.”

Aetna’s innovative mobile technology represents a major shift from retrospective information to real-time information. Employers, consumers and health care providers can now make better, smarter and safer decisions in ways they couldn’t before.

## Going Mobile: Customized and Convenient

Aetna asked consumers what they would like to be able to do with a mobile application, says McCabe. “We’ve responded with personalized, convenient features that help people save money and easily access health information.”

The mobile app allows people to access a directory of in-network health care providers, learn what procedures and diagnostics are covered under their specific health care plan, and compare costs of prescription drugs. They can also get turn-by-turn directions to a doctor’s office, hospital or pharmacy; check the status of claims; and pull up an electronic version of

their insurance identification card to show a provider.

Based on the number of downloads and Aetna Mobile usage to date, McCabe says it is already making a difference. “Beyond comparing costs and looking at their health records, people are getting more fully engaged in their health care. That is our primary objective.”

## Making Sense of Fragmented Data

Aetna is also using advanced technology to manage complicated and fragmented health records. This is not only a convenience issue but a safety issue for patients, caregivers and health care providers. The company uses its CareEngine® technology platform to identify and respond to gaps in care.

“When a woman misses a mammogram appointment, for example, or when different doctors prescribe medications that interact dangerously, we can send out an alert,” McCabe explains. “One individual’s health care record might be 50 pages long—so with a way of surfacing critical information quickly, we can help provide a better quality of care and better outcomes.”

## Meeting Members Where They Are

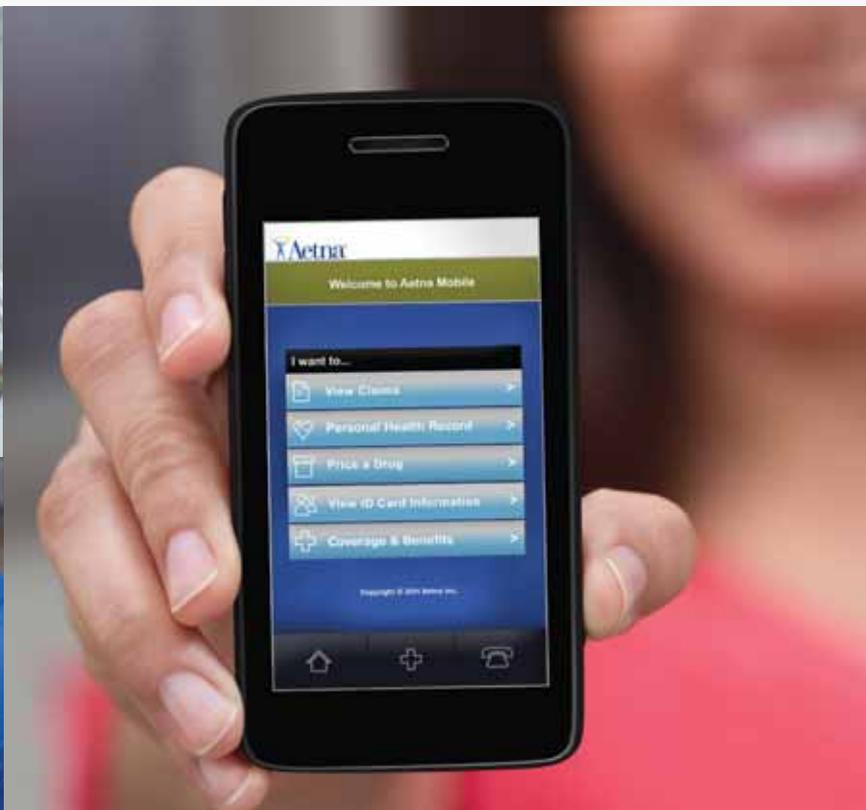
“Our culture is increasingly on the go—with more than one-third of American adults owning smartphones,” says McCabe. “It’s imperative that we meet our members where they are with resources that simplify the work of making well-informed health care decisions and improve their interactions with their physicians.”

## WEB DIRECTORY

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