NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Aug. 9, 2021

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A unique partnership to keep older North Dakotans safe and healthy

FARGO, North Dakota - A local senior care organization and a local technology startup are teaming up to keep older North Dakotans safe and healthy.

The new partnership between Northland PACE and WalkWise provides simple technology to seniors that helps track their walker activity at home. Northland’s use of WalkWise has already resulted in the detection of falls, early identification of clinical outcome concerns, improvements to therapy programs, and the creation of a positive experience around walkers to improve fitness and prevent falls.

Despite serving a similar population to nursing homes, PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) across the country saw one-third fewer deaths from COVID-19 among their participants. By keeping high-risk seniors in their homes and using technology to interact, PACE programs continue to prove to be a viable alternative to nursing home placement through the delivery of a comprehensive and coordinated care model designed for everyone that enrolls into the program.

With the help of an early pilot program with Northland’s Bismarck headquarters center, WalkWise has been expanding their presence across to all Northland PACE locations to include their newly opened Fargo office. WalkWise invented a smart walker attachment that tracks hour by hour activity levels, analyzes changes in behavior, and can alert caregivers and families if the walker tips over or remains inactive for a long period of time. By knowing if the walker is not
being used properly, PACE nurses and therapists can encourage 24/7 walker use to reduce the likelihood of falls, which are the leading cause of fatal injury for seniors.

“Knowing what’s going on in daily life is vitally important for care providers, and we’re delighted that Northland PACE is using our technology to facilitate their incredible mission “states WalkWise CEO Peter Chamberlain.

The new partnership sees the use of WalkWise expand to most every walker user at all four Northland PACE centers: Fargo, Bismarck, Minot, and Dickinson. In addition, different parts of the organization are making use of the data gathered from the walker attachments, including therapy, nursing, and case management.

“Our team’s use of WalkWise spans the continuum of care needs. We’re able to be preventative by keeping track of activity levels and encouraging increased activity when appropriate, but we can also detect changes in the data from day to day that helps us prevent emergency room visits and hospitalizations”, says Executive Director Ryan Bosch.

Northland PACE, including its newest center in Fargo offers eligible seniors an all-inclusive healthcare option providing participants that enroll into the program the ability to remain living safely at home. The program’s mission is to deliver crucial well-coordinated healthcare services to prevent unnecessary ER visits, hospitalizations, or the need for entering an institutional setting such as a nursing home, and promote healthy independent living.