



How to Unlock Smarter, More Cost-Effective Care with Stewardship



Hospitals and health systems are operating in a [turbulent era](#) rife with challenges on nearly every front: From rising costs for both labor and supplies to changing payment models and regulatory reforms, providers must lean into [strategies](#) that use resources more wisely and help reduce costs without sacrificing quality.

[Unnecessary or inappropriate care](#) accounts for a significant portion of healthcare spending, squeezing already thin hospital margins while hurting patient care. Clinical decisions — including prescribing choices, supply utilization, admission status and discharge dates — carry direct financial implications, because they can lead to waste, inefficiency or suboptimal outcomes if not carefully managed.

Effective management of healthcare costs depends on having the right information at the right moment. But many hospitals and health systems struggle to provide clinicians and other stakeholders with real-time, integrated views of patient needs alongside cost and quality data. Likewise, they often fail to engage clinicians as equal partners in cost containment efforts.

[Premier's Stanson Health Stewardship solution](#) tackles this problem, helping to reduce unnecessary utilization and supporting safer, more cost-conscious decisions without interrupting the flow of care — a fundamental driver of clinician engagement.

"Hospitals are battling rising costs and shrinking margins," said David Zito, Premier's President of

Performance Services. *"[Premier's Stewardship solution](#) helps create financial efficiencies for virtually any provider, in any clinical setting, while helping them deliver care that is better and safer for patients."*

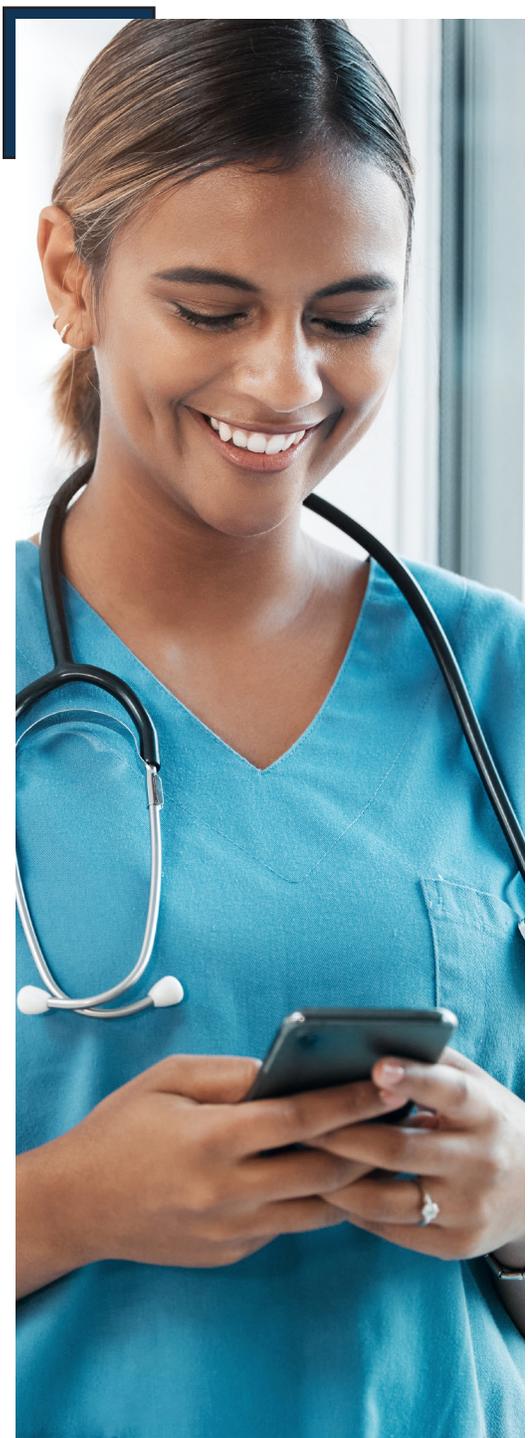
Part of [Premier's clinical decision support \(CDS\) suite](#), Stewardship reinforces a value-based mindset by surfacing real hospital costs and helping guide clinicians toward lower-cost options within their workflow. It empowers providers by delivering insights before, during and after the point of care within any electronic health record (EHR).

"Waste in the U.S. healthcare system costs [hundreds of billions of dollars](#), and [unnecessary services are a major culprit](#)," said Mukul Mehra, MD, Premier's Senior Physician Executive for Clinical Decision Support. *"When health systems foster a culture of stewardship, care providers recognize that low-value care harms patients, waste erodes valuable hospital and health system resources, and every clinical order must have a clear purpose and value."*

"Provider engagement is critical to ensure smooth adoption and reduced low-value care."

Making Stewardship part of everyday decision-making can help health systems strengthen both clinical and financial performance. Premier is your ally on the journey, channeling real-time, evidence-based support into better patient care and a stronger bottom line.





Containing Costs and Transforming Care Through Stewardship

Premier's Stewardship solution addresses a challenge that has long hindered hospitals and health systems in their quest to contain costs while delivering optimal care: information siloes that create a deep divide between financial and clinical data.

Seamlessly integrated with any EHR via a lightweight, non-intrusive ribbon overlay, the Stewardship app is an advanced CDS technology that delivers cost and quality insights directly into the clinician's workflow, bringing timely, context-rich guidance that helps align a clinician's care decisions with broader resource stewardship goals.

"Combining cost information and clinical literature in a common framework is a rare practice, because it can be arduous without the right tools," said Mehra. "But it's critical to define value by examining the qualitative and financial impacts of clinical decisions."

Using the app, providers can see value-based alternatives for medications, labs and imaging in real time, empowering them to select options that maintain quality while reducing unnecessary spending. Providers also receive real-time insights on iatrogenic risk data, helping protect patient safety while addressing waste.

Meanwhile, healthcare leaders gain continuous visibility into operational performance through analytics on resource use, length of stay (LOS) and readmission patterns.

"Current cost information is not provided by any EHR," said Mehra. "This critical missing component — the 'financial' in 'clinical financial decision support' — is what makes Stewardship such an effective tool for reducing healthcare waste."

Average of \$94 saved per patient stay with smarter clinical and financial insights*

*Premier internal data; independently validated by active customers





Waste in the U.S. healthcare system costs hundreds of billions of dollars, and unnecessary services are a major culprit.

Mukul Mehra, MD,
Senior Physician Executive for Clinical
Decision Support, Premier

How Stewardship Works

Powered by a novel clinical financial decision support framework, Premier's Stewardship solution captures real-time drug costs, provider details, whether certain therapeutics are on formulary, and more. It then maps these intricacies, roots out low-value care tendencies and identifies appropriate interventions — quickly delivering a plan of attack via a low-profile "nudge" within the EHR.

In practice, the Stewardship app combines current clinical literature with contextual details about the patient. Then, it maps the cost of the therapeutic in question against that of alternative therapeutics. A contextual analysis of the current clinical situation also helps determine whether low-value care is occurring or about to occur.

Within the EHR, the app delivers a subtle nudge for discontinuation, dose reduction or an alternative and provides a link to the abstract supporting the recommendation provided to the clinician for their consideration. The nudge feature is configurable and disappears after seven to 10 seconds to avoid disrupting care. The clinician may choose to continue through their workflow but can always recall the information with one click.

Nudge responses are continually captured and analyzed by the Stewardship app. Future nudges are customized to align with past behavior, much like a streaming music service adapts to a person's listening habits, "likes" and more. And while nudge responses vary by clinician and market, robust data fuels enterprise-level discussions to help reduce variation across even large, complex health systems.

"The technology pulls massive amounts of complex, disparate information into a single active, hard-stop framework, and it does so judiciously," said Mehra. "These details help clinicians make informed decisions about value at the point of care.

"The real-time, adaptive nature of the alerts and the data informing them deliver unmatched clinical financial decision support."



Stewardship embeds real-time value analysis directly into provider workflows, creating financial efficiencies while enabling better, safer patient care.

21 percent: Passive nudge response rate for Premier's Stewardship solution.*

*Premier internal data; independently validated by active customers

Premier's Stewardship solution surfaces contextual, cost-aware insights without disrupting clinical workflows.

Seamlessly integrated with any EHR via a lightweight, non-intrusive ribbon overlay, the enhanced CDS platform offers:

Real-time guidance for medications, labs and imaging, empowering providers to select equally effective, lower-cost alternatives that align with their medical judgment.

Hospital resource utilization analytics, including insights on length of stay (LOS), antimicrobial use and risk-adjusted readmission rates.

Clinical alerts that suggest more appropriate medication and lab ordering practices.

Pharmacy and supply chain integration to better align care with financial strategies.

Revenue protection tools, including prior authorization (PA) guidance and documentation support that help reduce claim denials and improve billing accuracy.

Real-Time Insight: The Three Cs

Premier's Stewardship solution hinges on three "Cs" that, together, help providers make safer, more cost-effective decisions without disrupting their clinical process:

1. Cost

- Uses the facility's actual costs of meds, labs and imaging.
- Nudges providers only when the potential cost savings are material.

2. Content

- Cites published clinical guidance that helps providers determine when the higher-cost option is more appropriate than a lower-cost alternative.

3. Context

- Delivers patient-specific insights, not generic rules.
- Increases relevance and reduces alert fatigue by factoring in provider history and benchmarking.



Success Story

Case in Point: Using Real-Time Decision Support to Cut Waste

Ardent Health, a leading provider of healthcare services with facilities across the country, became an early adopter of Premier's Stewardship solution. With 30 hospitals in six states and 280 care locations, Ardent decided to pilot the Stewardship app with the hospitalist team at one facility. The health system set a modest goal of \$32.50 average savings per admission and positive provider feedback.

"The initial pilot achieved \$97 average savings per admission within 90 days, easily surpassing the goal," said Susan Hughes, Ardent's Vice President of Case Management.

Following the success of the pilot, Ardent launched a systemwide initiative to cut waste and strengthen throughput with Stewardship, sustaining adoption across diverse sites and building a scalable cost-containment framework. And as usage grew, so did Ardent's ROI: Average savings per admission increased to \$149.

"Premier made rollout easy for us because the strategy is baked into the go-live process," said Hughes. "We're thrilled with the return on investment."

Ardent Health tripled its initial financial success metric, achieving average savings of \$97 per admission in the pilot and growing it to \$149 per admission following broader system adoption.



**Premier isn't a
vendor — they're a
partner. And a good
partner listens,
shares ideas and
works alongside you.**

Susan Hughes

Vice President of Case Management, Ardent Health

Success Story

Case in Point: Unlocking Smarter, More Cost-Effective Care with Stewardship

MultiCare Health System, a 2,064-bed provider based in Tacoma, Washington, sought to eliminate wasteful practices by [partnering with Premier to embed the Stewardship app at the point of care.](#)

The health system implemented the Stewardship app, designed to reduce unnecessary medications, labs and imaging tests. Unlike traditional CDS tools, the Stewardship app surfaces cost-effective alternatives when clinically appropriate, preserving provider autonomy.

The result? Stronger provider engagement, with a 26 percent acceptance rate (including 23 percent for medications and 36 percent for labs) driven by an unobstructive design that avoids alert fatigue and respects clinician workflows.

The initial rollout was conservative yet delivered clear early returns. Starting with four medications and three lab tests, MultiCare saw average savings of \$179 per accepted recommendation and approximately \$81 per discharge.

Backed by oversight from MultiCare's CDS governance committee and requiring minimal information technology (IT) lift, the Stewardship app was implemented with minimal disruption — an important consideration for health systems balancing tight resources and EHR transitions. The next phase of deployment will extend these benefits across additional departments and care settings.

With Premier's Stewardship app, MultiCare saw average savings of \$179 per accepted recommendation and approximately \$81 per discharge.





Strategic decisions. Safer patients. Stronger margins.

The situation is urgent, and complex challenges call for holistic, integrated solutions. Fortunately, [Premier's Stewardship solution](#) is a huge step in the right direction, supporting your clinicians and patients at the point of care while helping your bottom line weather the storm.

Ready to navigate the future of value-based care with confidence and clarity?

Get in touch today to learn how Premier's Stewardship solution can transform your clinical and financial outcomes.

