

Partners build company to streamline health care processes

By MELINDA RIZZO
Special for Lehigh Valley Business

Doctors and their patients have a lot to keep track of during and after a visit – discharge instructions, medication reminders, follow-up appointments.

A Lehigh Valley-based startup wants to streamline the process, a simple idea that requires some complex technical legwork.

The company, NextShift LLC, integrates health care records and systems to ensure better follow-through, on both sides of the prescription pad.

“Clients come to us to transform what they’re doing,” said Josh Caggiula, chief marketing officer for the company, which is based in the Ben Franklin Technology Partners incubator at Lehigh University in Bethlehem.

The transformation may involve updating 20-year-old systems, crafting custom software packages and integrating artificial intelligence, Caggiula said. It also could involve shifting deskbound computer programs into the cloud.

In other cases, the company is helping clients use smart devices like Google Home to allow patients to share information about their medication intake, all within the constraints of strict privacy laws.

“There is a benefit of reinforcement, of reminding people of medication and

ABOUT NEXTSHIFT LLC

- **What it does:** Marketing consultant and digital software/technology company serving health care providers and manufacturers.
- **Address:** 116 Research Drive, Bethlehem
- **Number of employees:** 30
- **Website:** www.nextshift.com

appointments and coaching for better health overall,” said Rob Tedesco, NextShift’s CEO. We can come up with middle-ground solutions, where we get that impact and benefit and we’re being considerate and careful about those reminders.”

Caggiula and Tedesco are joined by a third partner, Imran Deshmukh, chief technology officer at NextShift.

BROAD APPLICATIONS

Clients include Johnson & Johnson, CancerCare and the Lymphoma Research Foundation.

And what works for one company may work for others, said Wayne Barz, manager

of entrepreneurial services for Ben Franklin.

NextShift “is able to identify unique solutions that may apply across the entire pharma/health care industry,” Barz said.

He said the Ben Franklin incubator helped grow NextShift from its three founding members to its current staff of 30 employees.

NextShift can continue to grow thanks to roughly \$85,000 in tax credits from South Side Bethlehem Keystone Innovation Zone, a business incentive program.

Caggiula said the credits, which can be sold, would help NextShift move the needle faster for growth. Overall, the company has received \$165,000 from the

Keystone Innovation Zone.

“As a small business, the investments we’re able to make in innovation is limited. Because of the KIZ tax credit money, it has helped us make better strides,” Caggiula said.

Founded in 2004, the SouthSide Bethlehem Keystone Innovation Zone is one of many programs in Pennsylvania helping companies with patents, new product development, recruitment, and research and development funding.

Another goal is to keep entrepreneurs from leaving home, said Asher Schiavone, coordinator for the Bethlehem Economic Development Corp., which administers the Southside innovation zone.

“For us, the end game is having talent stay here and job creation,” Schiavone said.

A graphic bears the likenesses of NextShift LLC’s three partners, from left: Imran Deshmukh, chief technology officer; Rob Tedesco, CEO; and Josh Caggiula, chief marketing officer. GRAPHIC/SUBMITTED



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