

The Rise of **Continual Health**: How Always-On Care Is Redefining Preventive Medicine

And a Deep Dive on One Breakthrough
Company Shaping this Transformation

Ryan Frankel
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About Workup

Workup helps people make sense of the fast-changing world of health, diagnostics and wellness. The platform brings together 1,740+ solutions, spanning lab testing, metabolic health, fitness, supplements, therapeutics, recovery tools and more - including many of the companies building the next generation of continual health models.

Workup includes both paying members and unpaid listings, all curated to help consumers find trusted, evidence-oriented options.

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Transparency Note: This report highlights [Function Health](#) as a case study. Function Health is a current Workup member.

The Emergence of Continual Health

Over the past five years, consumers have moved from passive, symptom-driven patients to proactive managers of their own health. COVID accelerated self-testing, wearables normalized continuous data streams and consumer expectations around transparency, pricing, and convenience have fundamentally reshaped how people engage with healthcare.

The result: individuals now act more like traditional retail consumers than patients when approaching health and wellness.

“Part of what makes “continual health” so exciting is it’s an area where consumers can actually play a role, taking agency back from the traditional healthcare system.”



Derek Flanzraich, CEO 5HT

Demand for Transparency, Convenience and Control

- 61% of consumers cite affordability as the top barrier to healthcare access (Forerunner citing U.S. Federal Government data).
- Clear pricing, predictable experiences and frictionless journeys have become table stakes across categories.
- At-home labs, supplements and direct-to-consumer programs deliver the convenience and transparency people now expect in health.

Younger Generations Are Leading the Shift

- Millennials and Gen Z are the most prevention-focused generations on record (McKinsey).
- Search interest in “longevity” has grown 200%+ since 2019 (Google Trends).
- These generations expect data-rich, personalized, year-round health support – and will pay for it.

Behavioral Shifts Driving Proactive Health

- 72% want continuous visibility into their health data, not periodic check-ins (Deloitte 2024).
- 70% engage in preventive behaviors monthly – supplements, biomarker testing, specialized nutrition (McKinsey).
- Consumers choose brands that reflect their values – identity, ethics and personalization now influence health decisions.

Interest of “longevity” as a search term in Google



What These Shifts Mean for Today's Health Consumer

Across all trends, five core expectations now define what consumers demand from modern health experiences:

1. Always-On Visibility

People expect real-time insight into their health – not annual snapshots. Continuous metrics, repeat labs and longitudinal tracking are now baseline expectations.

3. Transparency & Predictability

Clear pricing, clear steps, and predictable experiences are now mandatory. Hidden fees, unclear timelines and opaque processes break trust instantly.

5. Integrated, High-Design Digital Experiences

Consumers expect clean dashboards, trend analysis and unified data views that behave like the best consumer apps – intuitive, seamless and aligned with their values.

2. At-Home & Logistical Convenience

Consumers want frictionless access: at-home diagnostics, fast shipping, simple onboarding and digital-first interactions that eliminate traditional system bottlenecks.

4. Personalized, Actionable Guidance

Insights must translate into tailored recommendations across nutrition, supplements, fitness, sleep, stress and daily habits. One-size-fits-all advice no longer meets expectations.

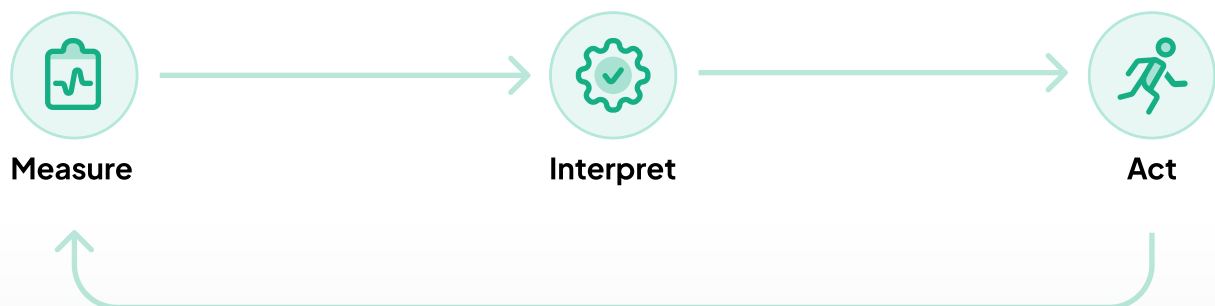
"The first step to good health is reclaiming agency. When you can measure and understand your body in real time, you're no longer a passenger waiting for a breakdown or accident—you're actively steering your health journey. It's a shift from passivity to participation, from reaction to proactivity. This new paradigm empowers individuals to architect their well-being every single day, instead of waiting for that annual doctor visit."



Sean Hoess, Founder & CEO,
Eudēmonia Summit

These shifts represent more than changing preferences; they are creating a new ecosystem of consumer-driven health. Continuous visibility, preventive behavior and digital-first expectations now shape how people manage their well-being. This emerging landscape stands in contrast to a traditional healthcare system built around episodic visits, reactive treatment and administrative complexity.

Within this environment, Continual Health has become the defining framework. It captures the movement toward ongoing measurement, proactive behavior change and seamless digital integration supported by diagnostics, wearables and AI-driven insights.



Continual Health describes a new model of personal health management centered on ongoing measurement, real-time insight and proactive adjustment, with prevention as its foundation. Instead of episodic, symptom-driven encounters, Continual Health relies on a continuous feedback loop — measure → interpret → act → re-measure — enabled by diagnostics, wearables, AI-driven guidance and user-friendly digital tools.

Traditional Primary Care Exam vs Continual Health Model

Category	Traditional Annual Physical	Continual Health Approach
Purpose	Detect disease when symptoms appear or labs fall outside basic ranges	Detect disease decades earlier, optimize longevity pathways, close nutrient/hormone gaps, and prevent decline
Biomarkers Tested	~15–25 basic labs (CBC, CMP, lipids, A1C, TSH → varies by provider)	100–150+ biomarkers spanning hormones, immunity, metabolism, toxins, nutrients, aging, inflammation, cardiovascular markers
Depth of Testing	Surface-level screening to catch gross abnormalities	Deep, root-cause profiling across multiple physiological systems with trend analysis
Scans / Imaging	Often none; occasionally ECG or X-ray if symptoms warrant	Structured, periodic scans (DEXA, full-body MRI, coronary calcium) depending on program
Frequency	Once per year (or even less)	Continuous or semi-annual testing; many programs test every 3–6 months
Personalization	Generic population-level ranges	Personalized ranges, risk algorithms, dynamic adjustments based on history, genetics and goals
Actionability	General lifestyle advice; specialist referral only when abnormality is detected	Integrated action plans: nutrition, supplements, sleep, fitness, stress, environmental exposures
Follow-Up	Minimal unless a red flag appears	Frequent follow-up reviews, optional coaching, automated nudges, personalized protocols

The Continual Health Model in Action: Function Health

"Traditional healthcare is designed to respond once something goes wrong. Function takes a complementary approach — giving people a more complete, data-driven view of their health so they can spot issues earlier, stay ahead of risks, and take meaningful control of their long-term wellbeing."



Jonathan Swerdlin, Co-Founder and CEO of Function Health

Background

Function Health is a membership-based diagnostics platform with a single mission: helping people “live 100 healthy years” by detecting problems early and guiding personalized prevention.

Function Health was born from its founders’ frustration with the status quo. Dr. Mark Hyman, a 15-time NY Times bestselling author and functional medicine pioneer, has spent his career advocating for “P4 medicine” (Predictive, Preventive, Personalized, Participatory) to tackle chronic disease. He teamed up with tech entrepreneur Jonathan Swerdlin and others in 2021 to empower individuals with comprehensive data about their bodies before problems occur.

As Hyman puts it, Function “represents what healthcare truly should be”, shifting control to the individual and breaking down the “paternalistic medical system that . . . is essentially reactive, not proactive.”

Function Health is still young yet has already seen remarkable traction. It went live in mid 2023 and quickly grew past 100,000 members with a massive waitlist, eventually processing more than 3 million lab tests by 2024. Its momentum earned it a spot on TIME’s 2025 list of most influential companies and attracted backing from prominent investors across entertainment and sports. In late 2025, a16z invested \$298 million at a \$2.5 billion valuation.



Mark Hyman, Co-Founder & Chief Medical Officer of Function Health

What Members Get

At its core, Function packages what once felt like an ‘executive physical’ into a more approachable membership model. For an annual fee of \$365, members receive two comprehensive lab test panels per year, clinician notes, and access to an unparalleled breadth of health testing and insights that would typically cost thousands of dollars if purchased individually.

Those biomarkers span a wide range of systems:



Organ health

Liver, kidney, heart and vascular markers



Metabolism

Glucose control, insulin, lipids, markers tied to cardiovascular risk



Hormones

Thyroid panels, stress hormones, sex hormones and related factors



Nutrients

Key vitamins, minerals and micronutrients linked to energy, mood and immunity



Inflammation and Immunity

Markers of systemic inflammation and immune activity



Cancer and aging signals

Select biomarkers that can hint at risk patterns over time



Toxins and environmental exposures

Heavy metals and other less commonly tested factors

In a simpler sense, it’s a whole-body “under the hood” look – five to six times more tests than most primary care labs.



Workup's Firsthand Experience With Function Health

As part of Workup's evaluation of leading continual-health platforms, cofounder and CEO Ryan Frankel completed Function Health's full workflow – from enrollment and testing through data interpretation, follow-up reporting, an Ezra cancer screening and use of the platform's AI guidance tools. The observations below summarize his firsthand experience and help contextualize how Function performs in practice.

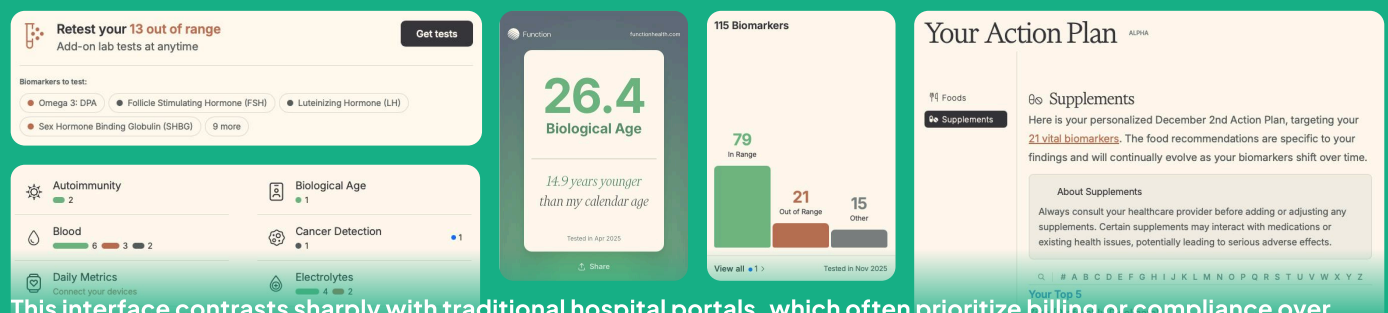


[Ryan Frankel](#), CEO of Workup

A Modern, Consumer-Grade Interface

Function differentiates itself not only through the scale of its testing but in the clarity and usability of how results are presented. In reviewing the platform, several strengths stood out:

- Biomarkers are charted over time rather than displayed as isolated values.
- Results include both standard and “optimal” reference ranges, adding clarity for non-clinical users.
- Markers are grouped into intuitive systems—cardiovascular, metabolic, hormonal, inflammatory—making patterns easier to interpret.





Clinician-Reviewed Reporting With Structured Interpretation

Each testing cycle includes a detailed written report produced through a combination of AI-generated drafting and clinician refinement. These reports:

- Synthesize multi-marker trends
- Recommend next steps, including diet, lifestyle or follow-up care.
- Highlight areas of potential concern

In Frankel’s evaluation, the reports demonstrated a high level of specificity – for example, linking cortisol findings, lipid patterns or inflammatory markers with personal risk factors and family history. While the platform is not intended to replace primary care, urgent findings do trigger direct outreach from a clinician. For most members, the written report serves as a comprehensive and actionable interpretation of their data.

AI-Enabled, Real-Time Guidance

Function’s AI chat feature adds an always-available layer of support. Members can ask questions about biomarkers, request explanations or generate personalized protocols based on their data. During Frankel’s evaluation, the assistant produced a tailored immune-support plan based on current biomarkers and recent travel-related stress – demonstrating how the tool can translate raw data into practical recommendations.

This feature shifts the experience from periodic reporting to continuous engagement, enabling more frequent and context-specific guidance.

Goals

- Strengthen immune system using biomarker and habit data
- Have a clear early illness protocol

Main Objectives

- Support healthy white blood cell production and function
- Maintain optimal vitamin D and zinc levels for immune defense
- Provide rapid-response support at the first sign of illness

Lifestyle/Tracking Suggestions

- Maintain consistent daily supplement intake for immune support
- Increase supplement support at the first sign of illness

Targeted Daily Supplement Schedule

Supplement	Dose	Timing	Rationale/Notes
Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol)	2000 IU IU	Maintain robust vitamin D status for immune modulation	Your vitamin D is excellent (87 ng/mL), but continued supplementation helps maintain optimal levels, especially in winter. Considerations: Monitor for signs of excess (hypercalcemia) if taking higher doses.
Zinc (picolinate or gluconate)	15-30 mg mg	Support immune cell function and antiviral defense	Your zinc is robust (72 mcg/dL); ongoing support is beneficial for immune readiness. Considerations: Avoid long-term high-dose zinc (>40 mg/day) to prevent copper deficiency.
Vitamin C (ascorbic acid or buffered)	500-1000 mg mg	Antioxidant and immune cell support	Supports white blood cell function and shortens illness duration. Considerations: Divide doses if sensitive to GI upset.
NAC (N-acetylcysteine)	600 mg mg	Supports antioxidant defenses and respiratory health	Helps maintain glutathione levels for immune resilience. Considerations: Consult with your clinician if you have asthma or take nitroglycerin.
Elderberry extract	500 mg mg	Supports antiviral immune response	May reduce severity and duration of viral illnesses. Considerations: Not for use in autoimmune conditions without clinician guidance.

Progress & Timeline

These recommendations are based on your slightly low WBC, robust vitamin D and zinc, and excellent inflammation markers. Adjustments can be made if you have allergies or sensitivities.

Would you like to make any changes to these supplement recommendations, or does this look like a good fit to move forward? Once approved, we'll continue to the next part of your protocol.

Follow-Up Testing and Longitudinal Insight

A notable component of the membership is the mid-year follow-up panel of approximately 60 biomarkers. This second test allows members to evaluate whether interventions recommended in the initial report are having measurable impact. The structure – baseline → intervention → reassessment – emphasizes continual insight rather than episodic evaluation.

Traditional annual checkups rarely provide this level of repeated measurement without a specific medical indication, making Function's model distinct in its longitudinal approach.

From Testing to “Medical Intelligence”: The Next Layer of Continual Health

The obvious next question is: what happens when you go beyond blood tests? That's where imaging, AI and the idea of “medical intelligence” come in.

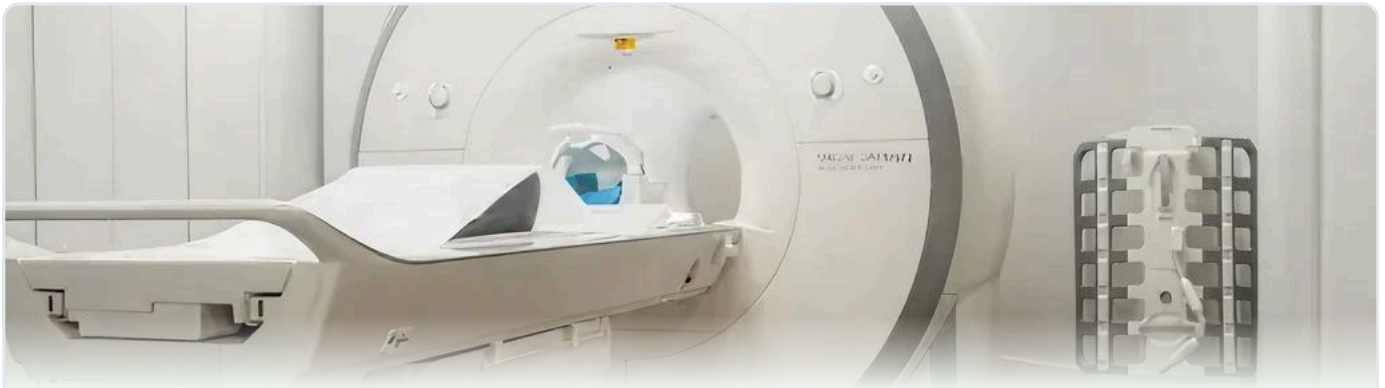
Imaging and the 22-Minute MRI

Function has expanded beyond lab testing into advanced imaging by acquiring Ezra, an AI-first MRI company. Members can now opt into whole-body MRI and CT scans as an add-on, including a 22-minute full-body MRI powered by FDA-cleared AI, priced far below what many hospitals charge for similar studies.

Workup CEO Ryan Frankel [experienced the basic Ezra scan for himself](#), noting that his Ezra visit was quick, calm and far more comfortable than expected, even with a history of mild claustrophobia. This isn't your ancient MRI experience filled with stress, noise and discomfort – thoughtful touches like take-home pajamas, music and clear guidance made the scan feel easy from start to finish. He received his full results in under 24 hours and the accompanying report was clear and actionable.

That shift is important strategically. Blood tests are powerful, but they don't show everything: structural changes, silent tumors and subtle organ-level abnormalities often require imaging. By layering scans on top of labs, Function moves closer to a multi-sensor view of the body.

As CEO Jonathan Swerdlin describes it, by combining lab data with imaging and other tools, they are creating a dataset that allows AI to **“become predictive – potentially identifying health issues before they occur.”** That future-looking approach is core to Function's mission.



Ezra MRI machine powering early detection and proactive imaging

The Medical Intelligence Lab

Medical intelligence was highlighted as a key inflection point in Function's 2025 \$298 million round of financing. The idea of medical intelligence is to:

- Unify labs, imaging, wearable data, medical records, IoT signals and research
- Continuously learn from that combined dataset as more people test and retest
- Surface early patterns and risk signatures that would be hard for any single clinician to spot
- Translate that complexity into simple, prioritized actions for individuals

In other words, it's a shift from *showing you data* to *helping you understand what that data means over time* - and updating those insights as your body, habits and environment change.

For consumers, this evolution is part of a broader trend: AI moving from general-purpose chatbots to domain-specific copilots that are deeply grounded in medical data. For the diagnostics industry, it points toward a future where the value is not just in running tests, but in:

- Integrating many types of signals
- Packaging intelligence in a way that is usable by both patients and clinicians
- Learning from large-scale, longitudinal datasets

Function is one of the earliest and clearest examples of this model, but it's likely not the last. Many companies that started as "wrappers" around national lab networks will need to evolve in similar directions - from simple ordering menus and dashboards into a guidance engine that interprets the terrain rather than just displaying it.

Real World Results

“Function helped save my life. Earlier this year, I found out through Function that I had elevated PSA values, which led to the discovery of my prostate cancer . . . When I went to a doctor, they were really against the whole concept [but . . .] I went through an MRI and a biopsy. Top oncologists at Mayo Clinic and Cedars all said that if I had discovered this in another 5–10 years, it would have been a catastrophe. I had surgery two and a half weeks ago, and now I’m sitting here in great health, with energy levels at their peak.”

[“Geoff’s Story”](#), @Function Health

There are numerous examples of Function’s data leading to actionable findings including this one in which [a woman detected a potential cancer recurrence](#) through proactive testing after years of being in remission; despite feeling healthy and symptom-free, her results revealed cancer had spread to her liver and bones, allowing her to begin treatment early.

These are real-world wins that validate Function’s value proposition of early detection and optimization.

Gaps and Limitations

No innovation is without limitations. These include:

Not a replacement for a doctor

Function doesn't prescribe medications, manage complex treatment plans or replace ongoing primary care. In an ideal future, Function could integrate telemedicine doctors or partner clinics to seamlessly take that important next step (as some competitors do).

Potential for false positives and incidental findings

The more deeply you look, the more likely you are to find something that needs further workup but may never become clinically significant. This is a general issue with broad screening, not unique to Function.

Risk of information overload

Seeing 100+ markers, imaging results and biological age calculations can be overwhelming. Even with good UX, some users may fixate on red flags or normals slightly outside "optimal" ranges.

Equity and access questions

While \$365 per year is far cheaper than many executive programs, it's still out of reach for some households, especially if not reimbursed by insurance or employers. However, the membership is eligible for FSA and HSA funds, which can help offset the cost.

In summary, Function works best for people who are willing to engage with the information, take ownership of their health, and make changes over time. It's not a magic bullet; it's a powerful mirror.

Alternative Models in the Continual Health Market

Direct-to-consumer labs

([QuestDirect](#), [Labcorp OnDemand](#), [Everlywell](#), [LetsGetChecked](#)) let consumers order individual panels – cholesterol, hormone tests, vitamin levels – a la carte. They're accessible and flexible but generally don't provide the same breadth of testing or longitudinal membership model that Function offers. And the interpretation of the results is often DIY or handled by brief telehealth consults.

Medical longevity memberships

([Lifeforce](#), [Parsley Health](#) and [Mecca Health](#)) blend diagnostics with ongoing medical care: telehealth, prescriptions, peptides, hormone replacement and coaching. They often test fewer markers than Function but include more hands-on treatment pathways and more frequent clinician interaction. Pricing is higher and the primary promise is guided longevity rather than purely diagnostics.

Performance and lifestyle platforms

(like [InsideTracker](#)) emphasize optimization for athletes and enthusiasts. Panels typically cover a few dozen biomarkers and integrate with wearables to tweak training, nutrition and recovery. The UX is strong, but the scope is narrower and oriented toward performance rather than comprehensive medical depth. A newer entrant, Superpower, mirrors much of Function's model and positions itself as a budget friendly option. While it lacks Function's track record and clinical depth, it offers a compelling baseline for cost conscious and younger users.

High-end diagnostic centers and executive medicine

([Fountain Life](#), [Biograph](#)) bundle full-body imaging, advanced labs and in-person consults at luxury price points – often tens of thousands of dollars annually. They pioneered the idea of proactive screening, but access is limited by cost and geography.

Note on Biograph: [Workup has interviewed their Medical Director, Michael Doney](#) but have yet to pilot the experience directly.



Function's distinctive position blends deep, comprehensive diagnostics at a consumer friendly price with a modern tech-forward experience and an expanding AI intelligence layer, all while stopping short of acting as a full medical practice. The result is a meaningful foothold in the future of preventive healthcare, bringing the kind of data once limited to executive health programs into an accessible direct-to-consumer format.

Where the Next Decade May Take Continual Health

Function Health illustrates several broader trends that are likely to define the next decade of consumer health.

1. Continual Health as a Norm, Not a Niche

As more people access 100+ biomarker panels, repeat testing and periodic imaging, the idea of checking in on your biology regularly will start to feel as normal as updating your phone's OS or syncing your fitness tracker. Function's membership model – annual fee, periodic tests and ongoing access – is one template for how that could look at scale.

2. Diagnostics Plus Intelligence, Not Just Results

The move from raw lab values to integrated medical intelligence is just beginning. Function's Medical Intelligence Lab is an early example of a platform that not only aggregates different types of data but actively learns from them and feeds insights back to users in real time. Other players will likely follow, building their own versions of health-specific AI layers.

For consumers, this will mean:

- More proactive alerts and nudges based on trends, not just individual results
- Richer context about what a change in one marker might mean given the rest of your profile
- Smarter routing: which results warrant a primary care visit, a specialist or lifestyle experiments

3. Consumer's Digital Expectations Will Drive Healthcare Design

Function's focus on design (clean dashboards, mobile flows and conversational AI) reflects a simple truth: once people experience health data in a modern interface, it's hard to go back to clunky portals and faxed PDFs. As platforms like this grow, they will quickly raise expectations for how all health systems present information.

In practice, that could mean:

- More consumer-style apps from hospitals and insurers
- Wider use of trend visualizations instead of single-point lab charts
- Interactive explanations and “ask me anything” interfaces built into patient portals

4. Partnerships Will Blur the Lines Wellness and Medicine

This shift is no longer theoretical — it's happening now. Equinox's partnership with Function integrates 100+ advanced lab tests directly into a gym membership, turning fitness centers into ongoing diagnostic hubs. (PR Newswire) Function has also partnered with GRAIL to deliver multi-cancer early detection, extending continual diagnostics into preventive medicine pathways. (PR Newswire)

These moves show how wellness brands, fitness ecosystems and clinical-grade diagnostics are converging. The future looks like this: health data captured where people already spend their time, interpreted continuously and routed seamlessly into lifestyle or medical action - without the traditional friction of the healthcare system.

5. Bundling & Price Compression

Bundling and price compression are already visible as competition scales. Function's membership now includes 100+ biomarkers for \$365/year, reduced from \$499, and priced far below comparable testing in traditional care.

6. Integrating Care Into Continual Health

A major missing piece in today's continual-health landscape is seamless access to clinical care. While concierge medicine offers a glimpse of diagnostics, primary care and follow-up under one roof, it remains expensive and limited in scale. For Continual Health to fully mature, platforms will need to integrate medical professionals directly into the experience – allowing users to move from testing to interpretation to clinical action within a single, coordinated customer experience.

The Growing Need for Independent Guides

As continual health accelerates and more companies introduce their own versions of advanced diagnostics, medical intelligence and longitudinal monitoring, consumers will increasingly need credible guides to help them make sense of a crowded landscape. People will want support in understanding real differences in testing depth, data quality, interpretation models, user experience and follow-up pathways, along with the practical questions of cost, accessibility and what each service is truly designed to solve.

[Workup](#) is one resource that can help bring clarity to those decisions, offering a structured way to compare options and evaluate the trade-offs based on personal goals, risk factors and budget without overwhelming people with noise.

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