

Case Study: Critical Access Hospital Succeeds Using Telehealth During COVID-19 and Beyond

Highlights

As the COVID-19 pandemic intensified, the leadership at Lake Chelan Health and Clinics, a Washington State Critical Access Hospital, realized a new approach was required to deliver optimal care to their patients. Part of their decision to use the Wanda Predictive Telehealth platform was the requirement to provide specialized care to high-risk patients that live in rural locations.

- Within 10 days and spearheaded by the Lake Chelan Health Community Paramedicine team, the COVID-19 Telehealth screening program was deployed
- The results demonstrated that the proactive use of integrated telehealth and remote monitoring was quickly adopted and strengthened the connection between the hospital and patients
- The telehealth program identified high-risk patients that required ongoing proactive care management. Lake Chelan Health continues to successfully transition these patients to disease-specific remote monitoring and telehealth, which is reducing the burden on the health system
- The high-risk patient population will be provided with ongoing remote monitoring and telehealth for their primary conditions in conjunction with regular COVID-19 Telehealth Screenings

The Challenge

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic presented Lake Chelan Health with some unique obstacles to overcome including:

- Patients, especially those at high risk with pre-existing conditions, were now reluctant to visit the doctor's office, clinics, or hospital fearing increased risk of infection
- The need to support and care for patients in rural locations with limited access to cellular service or Wi-Fi connectivity
- Supporting a patient cohort with COVID-19 Screening and disease information and support across a multi-language patient population while they are self-isolating
- Growing need to facilitate remote working for clinical staff and healthcare workers when self-isolating, to maintain high standards of care

The Solution

The hospital adopted and launched the COVID-19 Telehealth Screening and Care Management programs from Wanda Health, providing patients and quarantined individuals with automated remote symptom screening and remote care management for COVID-19 symptomatic and COVID-19 positive patients.

- Used a "rapid deployment" process going live in 10 days
- Patients were sent automated COVID-19 Daily Health Checks via multi-modal telehealth
- Doctors and care team received real time Alerts of symptomatic patients
- Doctors, staff, and patients interacted via the embedded video and voice conferencing
- Data collection followed symptom guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The programs were designed to support reimbursement requirements for COVID-19

Results:

481 active patients

3656 COVID-19 screenings

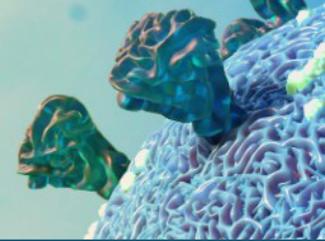
236% increase in patient requests for help

10% COVID-19 symptomatic

13% with conditions needing ongoing interventions

14% increase in productivity

99% patients very satisfied



The Learnings

The results indicate that the proactive use of the COVID-19 Telehealth Screening program helped Lake Chelan Health expand care for their patients during the pandemic and identified those that need ongoing specialized care. The program identified 10% of the patients as symptomatic for COVID-19. The key learnings include:

- Strengthening of the patient-care team relationship
- Successful identification of “at-risk” patients in need of additional care management
- Strengthening the commitment of the hospital to their patients
- Improved team productivity

The program data showed there were improvements in workflow efficiencies that accelerated COVID-19 identification. During the first thirty days, the average daily volume of patients onboarded and were sent COVID-19 Screenings increased 14% from 57 to 65 per day.

The results also show that the ease of use of the platform enhanced care team and patient interactions. Patients actively seeking out assistance from their care team rose 236% during the first 30 days from 5.7 requests per day to 19.2 requests per day. These patient requests included needing information about COVID-19 symptoms, medication assistance, and getting health coaching regard existing conditions.

An important finding was the identification 13% of the patient population that had pre-existing chronic conditions. These high-risk patients were identified through ongoing interactions with the care team during the COVID-19 program. To proactively support the community, Lake Chelan Health has expanded the use of remote monitoring and telehealth as a standard of care for 12 additional diseases targeting the reduction of adverse events and improving satisfaction as the primary metrics.

Conclusions

The successes achieved by Lake Chelan Health and their Community Paramedicine team during the pandemic by adopting telehealth and remote monitoring demonstrates significant improvements in the delivery of care for patients who live in rural locations, have connectivity limitations, or can't complete regular visits to the hospital or clinic.

Significant productivity, community responsibility, and patient outreach achievements were attained quickly due to the ease of use of the system.

The early identification of high-risk patients and their subsequent enrollment into disease-specific telehealth and remote care protocols has helped improve targeted patient care. The expectations for the program are to decrease the total cost of care for the hospital system while increasing it's standing in the community and building patient satisfaction.

Participants



Lake Chelan Health

Lake Chelan Health is Critical Access Hospital with supporting clinics in Chelan, Washington. Lake Chelan Health is equipped with a 24-hour emergency room, surgical center, and inpatient services, specialty care clinic and a family medicine care clinic. Lake Chelan Health is a vital component in the health care network that extends throughout the state and beyond. The family physicians, surgeons, and care team regularly partner with larger facilities to ensure a full range of quality medical services to the Lake Chelan Valley.

Wanda Health

Our leading telehealth platform combines predictive analytics, advanced behavioral sciences, patient engagement and multimodal telehealth into a clinical decision support and care management platform that reduces adverse events and improves adherence. Our customers are experiencing reductions in unplanned rehospitalizations and emergency department visits, increased patient adherence, added revenue and reduced costs of operations.

“The patients we serve have unique care needs, exacerbated by the rural locations in which they live. The Wanda Telehealth programs for COVID-19 and ongoing chronic care management have improves our ability to care for them, keeping them safer and healthier at home.”

Ray Eickmeyer, EMS Director Lake Chelan Health

