



Regional & Community Hospitals: Using Telemedicine to Improve Care, Enhance Outcomes, and Reduce Costs

In emergency and urgent care situations, medical staff may need immediate answers from specialists who can provide critical care decisions. With telemedicine, medical staff can quickly access the hospital's network for virtual consults, on-demand, and help patients receive the care they need when they need it most. And, care doesn't end when a patient leaves the hospital. Patient readmissions are costly and many readmissions are preventable, especially within the initial 30 days post-discharge. Telemedicine enables needed consults and care to patients—whether they are considering a trip to the Emergency Department, in the hospital, have been transferred to another facility or have recently been discharged to the home.

BENEFITS OF AMN HEALTHCARE VIRTUAL CARE MANAGEMENT FOR HOSPITALS

Virtual consults and patient visits can improve care, enhance outcomes, and lower costs while delivering greater patient and clinician satisfaction. Medical staff can supplement their high-touch care with high-tech innovative to ensure patients get the care they need in a more timely and convenient manner.

Better Quality and Timeliness of Care

- **Access to Specialists:** When a person is having a stroke, cardiac episode, or is in need of a psychological evaluation, emergency department staff often require consultations with specialists to ensure patients are assessed quickly and given the appropriate diagnosis and corresponding treatment. When these specialists are not readily available however, assessment and care may be delayed, which can negatively impact patient outcomes. Telemedicine allows hospital staff to quickly reach offsite specialists for a virtual consult on-demand, alleviating strain on the ED and boosting the timing and quality of care for the patient.



- **Collaborative Care:** Difficult-to-manage and expensive patient populations often require collaborative care across medical specialties or intensive management by highly specialized teams. Remote / offsite physicians can conveniently participate in virtual visits to provide higher levels of care for the most fragile patients, saving travel time to and from a hospital facility while expanding their reach beyond their medical office.
- **Pre/Post Op Check-in's:** Hospitals using telemedicine for pre- and post-op visits benefit from a lower no-show rate and less labor required in reminding patients of upcoming appointments. Hospitals are also seeing a significant increase in "patient preparedness" for their appointments. For example, in the case of pre-op appointments, hospital staff are pleased with patients' ability to fulfill pre-op requirements such as not eating after midnight, discontinuing the use of anti-coagulants, not wearing specific items (e.g., jewelry, perfume, deodorant) and arriving at the right location.

Expanded Reach and Services for the Community/Region

- **Discharge Management:** Hospitals are challenged to prevent unplanned, costly and unnecessary patient readmission within the initial 30-day period. To maintain patient wellness and improve outcomes, telemedicine provides hospitals with a new method of patient engagement post-discharge. Patients now have the monitoring support they need for medication adherence or treatment plans. Hospitals and referring physicians can engage patients in virtual visits post-discharge to drive better adherence and outcomes. If an issue arises, patients can access care on-demand through the comfort of their own home on a smartphone, tablet or computer.
- **Expanded Patient Base:** Through referrals, transfers, and partnerships, hospitals can expand their patient base, providing quality care for more patients across the community and region. EMS can also use telemedicine to connect with a hospital to ensure availability of general or specialized resources and obtain virtual consults prior to admission.
- **Additional Triage Services:** Urgent care and emergency room visits for low-acuity conditions are expensive for medical centers and patients, not to mention significant time in the patient waiting room. A significant portion of these low-acuity, single-episode visits for coughs, colds, and other common conditions can be handled via virtual visits at considerably lower costs and greater patient convenience. Telemedicine reduces the burden placed on emergency departments including afterhours and on weekends.