

INSIGHT

Volume 5 • Issue 2 • Summer 2020

Affecting Hospitals Today



06 | NORTH DAKOTA CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS
AMONG TOP 100 IN THE NATION

10 | COVID-19: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE
FEDERAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

12 | HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL AND FIRST
RESPONDERS: HOW TO COPE WITH STRESS AND
BUILD RESILIENCE DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC

NDHA
North Dakota
Hospital Association  Est. 1934



THE COMFORTS OF HOME

The newly expanded neonatal intensive care unit at ESSENTIA HEALTH IN FARGO, ND provides a beautiful, home-like environment for the tiniest of patients and their families. Equipped with advanced medical technology and designed to provide a calming, nurturing atmosphere, your stay will have the comforts of home.



EAPC PROVIDES FULL SERVICE BUILDING DESIGN
Architecture • Engineering • Interiors • Construction Management

EAPC.NET/EH-NICU



NDHA Board of Directors

Steve Weiser, MD President/CEO

Altru Health System
1200 S. Columbia Road
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 780-1611
asweiser@altru.org
At-Large – Fulfillment term thru 2022

Michael LeBeau, MD President

Sanford Medical Center Bismarck
300 N 7th Street
Bismarck, ND 58506
(701) 323-6104
Michael.LeBeau@sanfordhealth.org
At-Large – Fulfill Term thru 2021

Bryan Nermoe President

Sanford Medical Center
801 Broadway North
Fargo, ND 58122
(701) 234-6850
Bryan.Nermoe@sanfordhealth.org
At-Large – Fulfill Term thru 2022

Nikki Johnson Administrator/CEO

Cooperstown Medical Center
1200 Roberts Ave NE
Cooperstown, ND 58425
(701) 797-2221
njohnson@coopermc.com
At-Large – Fulfill Term thru 2020

Andrew Lankowicz, Secretary/Treasurer President

CHI St. Alexius Health Devils Lake
Hospital
1031 7th Street NE
Devils Lake, ND 58301
(701) 662-2131
andrewlankowicz@catholichealth.net
At-Large – 1st Term thru 2020

Dan Kelly, Chair AHA RPB 6 Delegate CEO

McKenzie County Healthcare System
PO Box 548
Watford City, ND 58854
(701) 842-3000
dkelly@mchsnd.org
Term thru January 2020 – Dec, 2022

Kurt Schley President

CHI St. Alexius Health
900 E. Broadway Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58103
(701) 530-761
kurtschley@catholichealth.net
At-Large – 1st Term thru 2022

Jeff Herman, Chair-elect CEO

Prairie St. Johns
510 4th Street South
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 476-7270
jeff.berman@ubsinc.com
At-Large – 1st Term thru 2021

Al Hurley West Region COO

Essentia Health
1702 S. University
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 364-3421
al.hurley@essentiahealth.org
At-Large – 1st Term thru 2022

Alan O'Neil CEO

Unity Medical Center
164 13th Street West
Grafton, ND 58237
(701) 352-9361
aoneil@unitymedcenter.com
At-Large – 1st Term thru 2020

Tim Blasl President

ND Hospital Association
1622 E. Interstate Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58503
(701) 224-9732
tblasl@ndha.org

03 | NDHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

04 | PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

06 | NORTH DAKOTA CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS AMONG TOP 100 IN THE NATION

07 | COVID-19: ADDRESSING EMOTIONS ON THE FRONT LINE

09 | ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

10 | COVID-19: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE FEDERAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

12 | HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL AND FIRST RESPONDERS: HOW TO COPE WITH STRESS AND BUILD RESILIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

14 | 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING

Insight Submission Policy

The ND Hospital Association is pleased to accept submissions for Insight. Submissions should be reasonable in length due to space considerations. In order to ensure the quality of our publication, editing for grammar, spelling, punctuation and content may occur. Articles, photos, and advertising should be submitted in electronic form.

To submit, please email NDHA at:
pcook@ndha.org

**The deadline for the Fall Issue is
October 7th, 2020.**

The ND Hospital Association

1622 E. Interstate Ave.
701-224-9732

www.ndha.org • pcook@ndha.org

ADVERTISING CONTACT INFORMATION

Joe Sitter - jsitter@unitedprinting.com
United Printing • 701-223-0505

NDHA Membership 48

Insight Circulation 900

Insight is published semi-annually by United Printing.

All rights reserved. Information contained within may not be reprinted wholly or in part without the written consent of the publisher.

© 2020 NDHA



WELCOME TO INSIGHT JULY 2020

What a strange year - so far. I usually talk about the many challenges we have in health care when I write this kind of message. We are used to striving for fair reimbursement,

increasing health care coverage, and fighting for regulatory relief. Then COVID-19 came along, and everything seemed to stop - except health care.

The stress the last four months have put on your hospitals and systems could not have been imagined. And you continue to care for COVID-19 patients and the many others who also need care. Yet, we know many patients are putting off care they should be getting. These have been trying times, for sure. NDHA's sole focus has been to support you in your caring mission - to answer your questions, advocate for you, provide resources, and remove obstacles.

Early in the pandemic, we worked closely with the Governor's office to remove barriers. The Governor issued an Executive Order waiving certain professional licensing requirements for health care workers to add workforce as quickly as possible. We also worked very closely with the North Dakota Department of Health to secure testing supplies and PPE and temporarily suspend certain hospital licensing requirements to make it easier for you to prepare for caring for COVID-19 patients. We co-hosted a weekly call with the Department and hospitals to ensure information was being pushed out to you, questions were being answered, and concerns were being addressed.

During this difficult time, I was very proud of our Board of Directors for collaborating to issue a statement recognizing that, while postponing elective surgeries would have a negative financial impact and create inconvenience for patients, it was the right thing to do to reduce the spread of COVID-19, preserve scarce PPE, and protect the availability of intensive care beds and ventilators within our state.

We are also working closely with our Congressional delegation on financial relief, which has, so far, resulted in \$250 million for North Dakota hospitals from the Provider Relief Fund. Our North Dakota Hospital Foundation recently received a COVID-19 grant from the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response (ASPR). We will be awarding \$1.35 million to participating hospitals and we are hopeful that we will receive additional awards in the future. NDHA also contracted with Eide Bailly to complete a study of the financial impact of COVID-19 on our hospitals. We know that, despite federal stimulus dollars bringing some relief, our hospitals are suffering major losses. The cost study will help us tell that story to our state and federal leaders.

Usually at this time of year we are gearing up for the legislative session which begins in January. It is strange now to think of how closely the chairs in the Capitol committee rooms are packed together. The legislature is trying to figure out how this next session will be handled. We will likely have to learn new ways to communicate with legislators about hospital issues. And, while we don't know how it is going to be structured in this new era of social distancing, we do have a clear vision of our platform: fair Medicaid reimbursement, continuation of Medicaid Expansion, expanding health care workforce, and adequate behavioral health resources.

Sadly, we decided to cancel the in person NDHA annual convention and tradeshow which was scheduled for this Fall in Bismarck. It was the right decision but, at the same time, it is disappointing to be unable to see you in person. Stay tuned for information on our virtual convention.

We miss you and hope we can be together again soon. Stay well.

*Tim Blasl, President
North Dakota Hospital Association*

Healthy
Insurance Starts
With Tailored
Protection.

 **VAALER**
INSURANCE ▾ RISK SERVICES

 vaaler.com  (701) 775-3131



 **West-Com**
Nurse Call Systems, Inc.

SYSTEMS USA
TECHNOLOGIES



Ensure patient care and staff productivity with the latest in **nurse call system technology** from BEK Care Solutions.

For inquiries, call or email Kevin:
701.214.4228 | kevinl@bektel.coop

 **www.bek.coop**



**Deep knowledge.
Attention and respect.
Understanding what's important to clients.**

It's how **Troy Nelson** became one of Barron's "Top 1,200 Financial Advisors."

Troy has appeared in Barron's "Consistently Tops" for ranking No. 1 in North Dakota from 2012-2018 and again in 2020. It's how Troy helps his clients work toward important financial goals right here in Bismarck, ND.

Troy Nelson

Edward Jones Financial Advisor
(701) 255-1196

1701 Burnt Boat Drive, Bismarck, ND 58503
troy.nelson@edwardjones.com

"Barron's "Top 1,200 Financial Advisors," March 16, 2020. Barron's Top 1,200 criteria based on assets under management, revenue produced for the firm, regulatory record, quality of practice, philanthropic work and more. The rating is not indicative of the financial advisor's future performance. Neither Edward Jones nor its financial advisors pay a fee to Barron's in exchange for the rating. Barron's is a registered trademark of Dow Jones & Co. For more information on ranking methodology, go to www.barrons.com.

TAL-7212G-A-AD

edwardjones.com
Member SIPC

Edward Jones®

NORTH DAKOTA CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS AMONG TOP 100 IN THE NATION

Each year, rural hospitals are analyzed through the lens of the Hospital Strength INDEX, the industry's most comprehensive and objective assessment of rural hospital performance in the United States.

Amidst uncertainty, these top performers are excelling in managing risk, achieving higher quality, securing better outcomes, increasing patient satisfaction, and operating at a lower cost than their peers. These groups serve as a benchmark for other rural facilities as they strive to achieve similar results and provide a blueprint for successfully navigating the uncertainty of the new healthcare.

The North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA) is proud to congratulate the following 12 North Dakota critical access hospitals that were selected for the **2020 Top 100 CAH's**:

- St. Andrew's Health Center, Bottineau
- Towner County Medical Center, Cando
- CHI St. Alexius Health, Carrington
- CHI St. Alexius Health, Devils Lake
- Jacobson Memorial Hospital, Elgin
- West River Regional Medical Center, Hettinger
- Jamestown Regional Medical Center, Jamestown
- Linton Hospital, Linton
- CHI Lisbon Health, Lisbon
- Sanford Mayville, Mayville
- First Care Health Center, Park River
- South Central Health, Wishek
(formerly Wishek Community Hospital)

Historically, North Dakota has had several critical access hospitals selected for the Top 100 CAH and Top 20 CAH recognition programs. The Top 100 CAH's are selected in the spring of each year, and the Top 20 CAH's are selected in the fall.



ND HOSPITALS IN 2020 TOP 100 CAH'S

St. Andrew's Health Center	-----	Bottineau
Towner County Medical Center	-----	Cando
CHI St. Alexius Health	-----	Carrington
CHI St. Alexius Health	-----	Devils Lake
Jacobson Memorial Hospital	-----	Elgin
West River Regional Medical Center	---	Hettinger
Jamestown Regional Medical Center	-	Jamestown
Linton Hospital	-----	Linton
CHI Lisbon Health	-----	Lisbon
Sanford Mayville	-----	Mayville
First Care Health Center	-----	Park River
South Central Health	-----	Wishek (formerly Wishek Community Hospital)



COVID-19: Addressing Emotions on the Front Lines

Audience: Front-line hospital staff and providers

Purpose: This resource identifies techniques for front-line providers to use when patients are experiencing increased emotion, worry or frustration. Using empathy, active listening and transparency enables hospital staff to provide support for patients and their families, build trusting relationships and diffuse conflicts even in times of crisis.

Techniques to address emotions, build trusting relationships and diffuse conflicts

TECHNIQUE	DO	SCRIPT	DO NOT
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge the emotions your patients disclose. Practice empathy. Empathy is sharing in the feelings of another. Although we might not understand their exact situations, we can understand the emotions they are experiencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "This information would make me nervous as well, but we are going to do everything we can." "You are raising your voice, and this seems to me you might be frustrated. I am here to help, and I want to work together to make a plan. Are you willing to work on this with me?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid saying, "I know exactly how you feel," "Don't worry" and "You'll be fine."
Active Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use nonverbal cues including head nodding and open body language. Rephrase or reflect what our patients have said to demonstrate that we are listening and understand their concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Thank you for sharing your concerns with me. I want to make sure that I understand you correctly. From what I am hearing, you are concerned that there is not a clear plan in place for you to receive your CT scan." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try not to respond defensively; be patient as you listen and remain calm. Avoid saying, "All of our patients are feeling this way."
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be transparent. Patients and their families can ask difficult questions and request answers that we may not have; it is important to let them know our limitations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I do not have an answer for that question right now. I anticipate we will get that answer in two days and we can discuss next steps then. Until then, we will watch the chest X-rays to help guide care." "I do not know when a bed will become available but, in the meantime, we will do everything possible to care for you here." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not make promises that cannot be kept. Do not provide false or incorrect information.

Additional Tips:

- Proactively involve management or patient representative services when patients appear upset. Including these individuals provides additional support to patients and helps connect patients to resources within the hospital system.
- Build trust by following through; for example, if you say you will talk again tomorrow, do it.
- Include the interdisciplinary team caring for a patient and their family in difficult or emotional conversations. Taking a team approach can help patients and their families feel fully supported with their concerns, and demonstrates that everyone is working together to resolve conflicts.
- Share patient concerns or emotional conversations with team members during shift change reports or patient handoffs so staff can be prepared if additional concerns or questions arise.
- Include information in this resource and additional scripting from the following COVID-19 resources in team huddles and reports so that all hospital staff are prepared for emotional conversations, and have a standard approach to supporting patients during this unprecedented time.

COVID-19-specific Questions and Conversations:

These resources offer examples on communication specific to COVID-19.

- COVID-19 PFE Scripting: [VitalTalk COVID-19 Ready Communication Playbook](#).
- Center to Advance Palliative Care COVID-19 Response Resources: [COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#).

Sources

- "Addressing patients' emotional needs during COVID-19 workup and diagnosis: Guidance for Clinicians." Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, 2020. https://www.michigan.gov/documents/coronavirus/BH_Guidance_for_Clinicians_diagnosing_COVID19_685878_7.pdf
- "De-escalation in health care ." The Joint Commission's Quick Safety Issue 47, Jan. 28, 2019. https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/workplace-violence/qs_deescalation_1_28_18_final.pdf?db=web&hash=DD556FD4E3E4FA13B64E9A4BF4B5458A

©2020 American Hospital Association | May 2020
www.aha.org/covid19



ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THE WELLBEING OF YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDERS?



NORTH DAKOTA PROFESSIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM

is a substance use and mental health monitoring program for medical professionals. It's the support you need to counter the effects of drug or alcohol abuse and mental health concerns.

We are here to help you.



NORTH DAKOTA PROFESSIONAL
HEALTH PROGRAM

919 S 7th St. Suite 305 Bismarck, ND
tel 701.751.5090 fax 701.751.7518
ndphp.org

DID YOU KNOW that Medical Providers are affected by Substance Use Disorders and Mental Illness at the same rate as the general population?

If you have concerns please contact the NDPHP.

NDPHP MISSION: To facilitate the rehabilitation of healthcare providers who have physical or mental health conditions that could compromise public safety and to monitor their recovery.

ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

An Intalere solution that improves profitability, streamlines workflows, and reduces errors—all while saving time and resources.

We know you're being challenged to reduce costs and bring more efficiency to operational processes. Managing levels of inventory, supporting the digitization of patient files, optimizing appointment scheduling and executing billing and claims processing procedures can seem like daunting tasks. RPA can help.

HOW IT WORKS

Intalere's RPA software can mimic a variety of human actions and can be used to complete many tasks. Essentially, any high-volume, rules-driven, repeatable process qualifies for automation. It's also noninvasive, as it's overlaid on existing systems without modifying the application's code.

- **Move files and folders.**
- **Copy and paste data.**
- **Fill in forms.**
- **Extract structured and semi-structured data from documents.**
- **Pull data from websites and other sources.**

BENEFITS

An Intalere RPA software robot never sleeps, significantly reduces mistakes and allows your employees to devote their attention to performing more important, strategic tasks.

- **Improve accuracy and control.**
- **Increase speed and productivity.**
- **Utilize flexibility and scalability.**
- **Enhance existing technology.**
- **See rapid payback.**

WHERE CAN IT WORK

RPA handles administrative, revenue cycle and supply chain processes with ease, allowing for superior scalability and flexibility within your facility.

• Revenue Cycle Management

- o Claims Submission
- o Insurance Verification
- o Denials Management
- o Medical Coding

• Supply Chain Processes

- o Inventory Management
- o Contract Management

• Administrative

- o Accounts Receivable/ Payable
- o Customer Service
- o Employee Onboarding
- o Payroll

The RPA data bot is programmed to follow your specific process, making it a compliant and consistent asset that never slows down or makes mistakes. RPA is a low-touch technology solution that can help maximize previous investments in electronic medical records (EMR), materials management and other enterprise software.

INTERESTED? Contact Dan Gannon or John Schreier at HSI Solutions and we will line you up with an Intalere Solutions representative who can guide you through a review. RPA projects typically run six weeks with a return on investment in six months. Initial software investments are fractions of the cost of typical EMR and other healthcare systems.

HSI solutions



COVID-19: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE FEDERAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

GAO-20-659T: Published: Jun 26, 2020. Publicly Released: Jun 26, 2020.

WHAT GAO FOUND

In response to the national public health and economic threats caused by COVID-19, four relief laws were enacted as of June 2020 that appropriated \$2.6 trillion. This funding provided support to individuals, health care providers, businesses, and state and local government.

While complete government-wide data will not be available until July, GAO determined that as of May 31, 2020, a total of about \$1.2 trillion of assistance has been provided—close to \$700 billion in expenditures and over \$500 billion in loan guarantees. Consistent with the urgency of responding to widespread health issues and economic disruptions, agencies have worked hard to give priority to moving swiftly. In moving quickly, however, agencies made trade-offs; thus, only limited progress has been made so far in achieving transparency and accountability goals.

GAO also identified challenges with the federal response to the crisis, including:

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

(PPP). The Small Business Administration (SBA) moved quickly to establish a new nationwide program, but the pace contributed to confusion and questions and raised program integrity concerns. GAO recommends that SBA develop and implement plans to identify and respond to risks in PPP to better ensure program integrity. SBA neither agreed nor disagreed. Implementing GAO's recommendation is essential.

ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) faced difficulties delivering payments to some individuals, and made some payments to ineligible individuals, such as decedents. GAO recommends that IRS should consider cost-effective options for notifying ineligible recipients how to return payments. IRS agreed.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI). The program could have an unintentional overlap with benefits provided under PPP. GAO recommends that the Department of Labor (DOL) immediately provide help to state unemployment agencies that specifically addresses PPP loans, and the risk of improper payments associated with these loans. DOL is planning additional guidance.

AVIATION-PREPAREDNESS PLAN. In 2015, GAO recommended that the Department of Transportation (DOT) work with federal partners to develop a national aviation-preparedness plan for communicable disease outbreaks. Thus far, no plan exists. GAO recommends Congress require DOT to produce a plan.

FULL ACCESS TO DEATH DATA. It is important to consistently use safeguards when providing assistance to individuals. The Treasury and Bureau of Fiscal Service do not have access to the Social Security Administration's full set of death records. GAO recommends that the Congress give Treasury that access and require that Treasury consistently use it.

MEDICAID. GAO previously found that during economic downturns, the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) formula does not reflect current state economic conditions. GAO recommends that, during an economic downturn, Congress use a formula to provide timely and targeted assistance during economic downturns.

WHY GAO DID THIS STUDY

The outbreak of COVID-19 quickly spread around the globe. As of June 17, 2020, the United States had over 2 million reported cases of COVID-19, and over 100,000 reported deaths, according to federal agencies. Parts of the nation have seen severely strained health care systems. The country has also experienced a significant and rapid downturn in the economy. Four relief laws, including the CARES Act, were enacted as of June 2020 to provide appropriations to address the public health and economic threats posed by COVID-19. In addition, the administration created the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

The CARES Act includes a provision for GAO to report regularly on its ongoing monitoring and oversight efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yesterday, GAO issued its first report (GAO-20-625).

Like the report, this testimony focuses on key actions the federal government has taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic, GAO recommendations for improvement, and evolving lessons learned relevant to the nation's response to pandemics, among other things. GAO reviewed data and documents from federal agencies about their activities and interviewed federal and state officials as well as industry representatives. GAO also reviewed available economic, health, and budgetary data.

WHAT GAO RECOMMENDS

In the report, GAO makes three new recommendations for agencies and three matters for consideration for Congress that address these issues.

To read the full report, visit the following website: <https://www.gao.gov/reports/GAO-20-659T/>

COMING SOON

TO A COMPUTER NEAR YOU
Embrace the Change v.2.0

September 30 - October 1, 2020
Virtual Educational Event

Details coming soon!

NDHA
North Dakota
Hospital Association  Est. 1934



SANFORD

AirMed

**SAVING LIVES IN MID-AIR
FOR OVER 40 YEARS**

(844) 4-AIRMED

HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL AND FIRST RESPONDERS: HOW TO COPE WITH STRESS AND BUILD RESILIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Providing care to others during the COVID-19 pandemic can lead to stress, anxiety, fear, and other strong emotions. How you cope with these emotions can affect your well-being, the care you give to others while doing your job, and the well-being of the people you care about outside of work. During this pandemic, it is critical that you recognize what stress looks like, take steps to build your resilience and cope with stress, and know where to go if you need help.

RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING:

- Feeling irritation, anger, or denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, or anxious
- Feeling helpless or powerless
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating

KNOW ABOUT STRESS-RELATED DISORDERS, COMPASSION FATIGUE, AND BURNOUT:

Experiencing or witnessing life threatening or traumatic events impacts everyone differently. In some circumstances, the distress can be managed successfully to reduce associated negative health and behavioral outcomes. In other cases, some people may experience clinically significant distress or impairment, such as acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or secondary traumatic stress (also known as vicarious traumatization). Compassion fatigue and burnout may also result from chronic workplace stress and exposure to traumatic events during the COVID-19 pandemic.

TIPS TO COPE AND ENHANCE YOUR RESILIENCE:

- Communicate with your coworkers, supervisors, and employees about job stress.

- o Talk openly about how the pandemic is affecting your work.
- o Identify factors that cause stress and work together to identify solutions.
- o Ask about how to access mental health resources in your workplace.
- **Remind yourself that everyone is in an unusual situation with limited resources.**
- **Identify and accept those things which you do not have control over.**
- **Recognize that you are performing a crucial role in fighting this pandemic and that you are doing the best you can with the resources available.**
- **Increase your sense of control by keeping a consistent daily routine when possible — ideally one that is similar to your schedule before the pandemic.**
 - o Try to get adequate sleep.
 - o Make time to eat healthy meals.
 - o Take breaks during your shift to rest, stretch, or check in with supportive colleagues, coworkers, friends and family.
- **When away from work, get exercise when you can. Spend time outdoors either being physically activity or relaxing. Do things you enjoy during non-work hours.**
- **Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting and mentally exhausting, especially since you work with people directly affected by the virus.**
- **If you feel you may be misusing alcohol or other drugs (including prescriptions), ask for help.**
- **Engage in mindfulness techniques, such as breathing exercises and meditation.**
- **If you are being treated for a mental health condition, continue with your treatment and talk to your provider if you experience new or worsening symptoms.**

How to Cope with Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mental-health-healthcare.html>

COVID-19: Quarantine vs. Isolation

QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others.



If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19



- Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.



- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.



- If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.



If you are sick and think or know you have COVID-19



- Stay home until after
 - 3 days with no fever and
 - Symptoms improved and
 - 10 days since symptoms first appeared



If you tested positive for COVID-19 but do not have symptoms



- Stay home until after
 - 10 days have passed since your positive test.



If you live with others, stay in a specific “sick room” or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.



CS317422-A

6/8/2020 2PM

cdc.gov/coronavirus

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING

Recent technological advances have changed every aspect of how we live our lives. From the photos we snap on our smartphones to the recipes we read off our refrigerators, we feel the impact of smart technology every day. One of the biggest industries being revolutionized by technology, however, is the healthcare industry.

One of the most exciting technological opportunities in the healthcare industry is remote patient monitoring. These devices can give doctors information about patients on a minute-to-minute basis while the patient's life goes on uninterrupted. Read on to learn more about this exciting technology and the ways it can improve patient care.

WHAT IS REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING?

Remote patient monitoring (RPM) is an approach that allows doctors to keep up with their patients' health even outside the office. It uses medical monitoring devices placed on the body to track certain patient vital signs. You might use RPM to track a patient's heart rate, oxygen levels, temperature, and more.

Even if you don't realize it, you may already be familiar with some remote patient monitoring devices. FitBits and Apple Watches already perform many of the functions of an RPM device. The only difference is that most people choose to send this information to their phone rather than their doctor.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Remote patient monitoring begins with a device that a patient wears on their body. This device tracks whichever metrics the patient and doctor have decided on, taking readings at specified times. Those readings are then transmitted securely to an online portal.

Once the data is transmitted, monitoring can be either automatic or manually handled – or, in many cases, both. An automated system may send out an alert if a patient's heart rises dangerously high or if their blood pressure drops suddenly. A physician may also review logs of data to get a better picture of a patient's hour-to-hour condition.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TELEHEALTH AND RPM

Telehealth is one of the more exciting areas of medical development, and in many ways, it seems similar to RPM. But the two are different in some important ways.

Telehealth allows patients to have appointments with their doctors from the comfort of their homes. This involves direct interaction with a patient and is a new way to manage traditional medical appointments.

RPM is a method of information gathering that happens throughout the normal course of a patient's daily life. There is no direct interaction with a doctor, although telehealth may be used to follow up on the results of RPM.

DIFFERENT TOOLS FOR RPM

There are a variety of different tools that can be used to manage RPM, depending on the patient's needs. Some tools help to monitor blood pressure, weight, and glucose levels in pregnant people. Others can collect extremely sensitive cardiac readings over the course of several days.

Some new RPM technologies have emerged in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to help track new cases. These devices can track temperature, heart rate, oxygen saturation, activity, and even posture in both infected and non-infected patients. This information is vital to helping doctors understand more about this virus, its symptoms, and its spread.

IMPROVES PATIENT ACCESS

One of the primary benefits of RPM is that it can improve patient access to healthcare. Many patients in rural areas have difficulty getting more specialized healthcare. Those services may not be available at all in their area or they may be a prohibitive distance away.

Remote patient monitoring can make it possible for people in rural areas or with demanding schedules to get access to the tests and care they need. A patient can get a sleep study or a cardiac test run without having to travel a long distance or take time off work. These results can then be interpreted by top-quality physicians anywhere in the world.

IMPROVES QUALITY OF CARE

RPM also makes it possible for doctors to provide better care to their patients. Diagnosing can be tricky because some symptoms may not present consistently, and doctors may have to rely on patient reports. Simple miscommunication or mistrust in the doctor-patient relationship can lead to months or even years of misdiagnosis.

With RPM, doctors can get a clearer idea of what's going on with

patients. Something as small as a temporary arrhythmia can show the difference between two conditions. RPM gives doctors a full picture of patients' health on an hourly basis, rather than once every few weeks.

LOWERS TREATMENT RISK

In some cases, treatment options for a condition can be risky. There's no way to know how a patient may react to a medication, and even with safe treatments, unknown allergies can cause dangerous reactions. No physician wants to be in the position of deciding whether it's a greater risk to the patient's health to start a treatment or to allow a condition to continue untreated.

RPM can help to lower the danger of risky treatments. Monitoring devices can constantly be on the alert for cardiac problems, dangerous changes in blood pressure, or high fevers. If any of the triggers occur, the device can alert emergency services at once so the patient can get treatment as quickly as possible.

PROVIDES MORE PATIENT ASSURANCE

In a medical world that's always having to move faster to keep up, it can be easy for patients to begin to feel neglected. They may spend ten minutes with a doctor, get a quick diagnosis and treatment plan, and be sent out the door. In these situations, patients may begin to lose trust in their doctors, especially if they're coming off a traumatic medical experience.

RPM can help to assure patients that their healthcare providers are continuing to look out for their needs even after they leave the office. Their medical team will be alerted if anything drastic happens, and they can continue to receive doctors' attention even while they're going about their day-to-day life. This can improve the doctor-patient relationship, as well as the overall patient experience.

INCREASES PATIENT EDUCATION

The days of a doctor telling a patient what treatment they need and a patient going home and blindly following those orders are over. Doctors have come to understand that patients are an important part of the team and that they should be involved in the care plan. And while many patients have begun to advocate for their own healthcare, there are patient education concerns that must be overcome in order for the patient to have the best outcome.

Remote patient monitoring devices can help improve patient education to further empower them. A patient may be able to see for themselves how certain lifestyle factors affect their condition, as well as how things like their heart rate or their oxygenation levels change throughout the day. The more patients understand

about how a condition is affecting their life, the better they can work with their healthcare team to manage it.

INCREASES PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

Many doctors also struggle with patient engagement. A patient who can't see the effects of a condition on their life may not be motivated to follow a difficult treatment plan. They may not see themselves as having an important role to play in their healthcare.

RPM makes it possible for patients to see the day-to-day repercussions of their lifestyle choices. Because the patient can see how their body is reacting to their decisions, they can begin to understand how important their role is in managing their health. It's a lot easier to be engaged with your treatment plan if you have a reminder about it on your body all the time.

IMPROVES PATIENT FEEDBACK

One of the biggest responsibilities patients have is giving their doctors accurate feedback about how their treatment plan is affecting them. But too often, this line of communication breaks down for any of a variety of reasons. A patient may feel bad about "cheating" on a treatment plan and so may not be truthful with their doctor, or they may simply not be trained to look for the subtle signs that doctors know indicate much larger issues.

With an RPM device, the lines of communication for patient feedback become much stronger. For one thing, the doctor has specific documentation of every tiny change in the patient's condition. But for another, patients may find it easier to recount certain triggers if their doctor already knows about their impact.

PROVIDES GREATER SUPPORT

Healthcare providers are always looking for ways to provide greater support for their patients. And it's a tough line to walk. While doctors want to give every one of their patients all the time they need, there are only twenty-four hours in a day, and not every concern may be able to be met.

RPM can help doctors give patients support when they need it most. Knowing about certain health events when they happen can let a doctor know that they need to call and check in on a patient. Instead of having to check in on every single patient on a more frequent basis, doctors can better utilize their time to reach out to patients during their times of greatest need.

HOW PATIENT PRIVACY IS MANAGED

Patient privacy has always been a priority in medical care, but maintaining that privacy becomes more challenging day by day. As our data moves online, it becomes easier for hackers and

viruses to break in and steal private information. And as you might imagine, RPM devices pose a special concern to those looking to protect patient privacy.

RPM devices are held to the highest standards of data security and must meet all HIPAA compliance regulations. Before a device is put into practice, it must be able to demonstrate that it is capable of protecting confidential patient information. And even with these regulations in place, patients who will be wearing RPM devices must sign a waiver stating that they have been informed of the privacy risks and protocols associated with the device.

IMPROVING DATA USE

RPM devices pose a unique challenge for data management even aside from security concerns. Artificial intelligence has great promise for helping to automate everything from diagnoses to medical alerts in the healthcare field. But some adjustments will be needed to make artificial intelligence work with these programs.

You can't set a static range of acceptable parameters for a given vital sign because every person is different. A heart rate of 100 bpm in a person with a normal heart rate of 90 bpm is very different than in a person with a normal heart rate of 70. A monitoring device needs to be able to make those distinctions.

MANAGING DATA TRANSMISSION

The other challenge RPM poses for data management is how often to transmit data. These devices are capable of transmitting up to dozens of readings a second if required. But that much data will become overwhelming as doctors try to interpret changes in a patient's condition.

Instead, a doctor must decide how often they need to get readings from these devices. For a subtle cardiac condition, a doctor may need a reading once or twice a second. But for factors that change over a longer arc, such as weight and blood sugar, doctors may only need readings a couple of times a day.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR RPM

One of the major questions healthcare providers and insurance companies are still working out with RPM is how reimbursement for it should work. On one hand, patients are not receiving direct doctor interaction while wearing an RPM device. But on the other hand, they are receiving medical care, even if it's on a remote basis.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services has ruled that RPM does count as a part of medical care for billing purposes. While this means patients will be billed for these services, it also means at least some health insurance providers will reimburse them. This variety of treatment has even received its own code in the CMS system – 99457 and 99458.

LEARN MORE ABOUT REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING

Remote patient monitoring is an exciting prospect in the future of healthcare. It has the potential to improve everything from patient experience to health outcomes. This new technology still has some challenges that must be resolved, but healthcare providers can count on seeing this as a growing option for patient treatment in the future.

"10 Things to Know About Remote Patient Monitoring". <https://www.hospitalcareers.com/blog/remote-patient-monitoring/>



Cost-Effective & Award-Winning Overnight Hospitalist Coverage

Schedule a Demo



Darin Willardsen, MD
Founder & CEO

Timothy Schmidt
Director of Accounts

Todd Severnak, DO
Founder

Our Coverage Solution will

- Increase Patient Satisfaction
- Increase Staffing Efficiency
- Reduce Physician Fatigue
- Reduce Patient Transfers
- Increase Overall Revenue



HorizonVirtual.net
(320) 345-5740

A Sustainable Overnight Staffing Solution for Physicians

We make it easy to schedule a full-time overnight physician. There is no longer a need to pay high salaries or train your support staff. We handle every aspect of the implementation process. We provide all the equipment, installation, and staff training. We are simply another physician on your team.

Our equipment is HIPAA Compliant and HITRUST CSF Certified, which easily integrates with your current Electronic Medical Record. We utilize state-of-the-art technology and a reliable telehealth platform to deliver timely care to your patients.

CASE STUDY RESULTS

6.1%
**Patient
Transfers**

*Full Case Study at HorizonVirtual.net/case-studies



HITRUST
CSF Certified



How an Overnight Telehospitalist Works

- 1** Hospitalist reviews patient's medical history and any available diagnostic scans through remote access of the Hospital's EMR.
- 2** Hospitalist interacts and communicates with the patient face to face through the telehealth cart to evaluate the patient's symptoms and needs.
- 3** On-site nurses assist with the physical exam and peripherals of the cart under the direction of the hospitalist.
- 4** Proper diagnoses are determined by the Hospitalist, and a treatment plan is prescribed. Detailed notes are created in the EMR.

HORIZON VIRTUAL

Virtual Health Services

3333 West Division Street, Saint Cloud, MN 56301 • (320) 345-5740 • info@horizonvirtual.net • www.HorizonVirtual.net



Fewer childhood vaccines have been given during the COVID-19 pandemic*

To avoid outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases and keep children protected, **vaccinations and well-child visits are essential**

*Compared with January-April, 2019

CDC.GOV bit.ly/MMWR5820 MMWR



Advertise Here!

HERE'S HOW!

CONTACT JOE SITTER
@ UNITED PRINTING
JSITTER@UNITEDPRINTING.COM
PHONE: 701-223-0505

Vaccines for Children

Protecting America's children every day

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program helps ensure that all children have a better chance of getting their recommended vaccines. VFC has helped prevent disease and save lives.



CDC estimates that vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2018 will:

- prevent **419 million** illnesses
(26.8 million hospitalizations)
- help avoid **936,000** deaths
- save nearly **\$1.9 trillion** in total societal costs
(that includes \$406 billion in direct costs)

more than the current population of the entire U.S.A.

greater than the population of Seattle, WA

more than \$5,000 for each American

Updated 2018 analysis using methods from "Benefits from Immunization during the Vaccines for Children Program Era—United States, 1994-2013"

 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/features/vfcprogram

NCR03g702 | 03/26/19

Keeping North Dakota well means knowing North Dakota Well



Breann Bischof
Individual Sales Representative,
Blue Cross Blue Shield
of North Dakota

Why choose BCBSND?

Put more than 1,000 North Dakotans to work for you, including Breann Bischof. By plan and by page, she helps Minot-area members understand their health plans and helps local students work on their reading. It's all part of BCBSND employees' statewide efforts to help keep all of North Dakota well—and well-read.

**This is health insurance,
North Dakota style.**
[BCBSND.com/NDStyle](https://www.bcbnsd.com/NDStyle)



Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield Association



*ND Hospital Association
1622 E. Interstate Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58503*

Presorted Standard
US Postage
PAID
Permit #256
BISMARCK ND
Zip Code 58504



PO Box 7340, Bismarck, ND 58507-7340 | www.hsisolutions.org



General: 800-548-2744 or Sales: 701-471-4588



800-442-0462



701-354-0312



701-204-7123

Endorsed Business Partners

Accurate | Care Credit | Comdata | First American Healthcare Finance | FocusOne Solutions
Hospital Careers | Juniper | Jackson Physician Search | MCAG | Performance Healthcare Solutions | SUNRX