



March 26, 2020

ATTENTION: All Employees, Physicians, Residents and Students

Innovating Telehealth During Times of Unprecedented Change

Moving quickly, thinking outside the box and working in new ways has become the norm throughout the MidAmerica Division. I'm proud to say that our incredible Telehealth Services team has taken the lead in innovation and using approved technology that enables us to treat patients quickly, safely and helps to conserve PPE.

Leading the way in telehealth is not something new for us. We currently have 19 telemedicine service lines and 45 outreach telehealth sites. But over the past few weeks, the Telehealth Services team collaborated with our Clinical Services Group, Physician Services Group and ITG to expand our telehealth network to meet the care demands created by the COVID-19 outbreak. Below are some highlights of how we're using telehealth.



Outpatient Employee & Patient Monitoring

The MidAmerica Division was selected to be part of the first wave to try the new **Vivify Health app**, a remote monitoring tool for those with possible COVID-19 exposure. Through the app, users share their symptoms and temperature, which are monitored by our Care Assure nurse navigators. If the data provided warrants intervention, the Care Assure nurse will reach out to coordinate the next level of care.

Who does it benefit? Beginning March 25, HCA MidAmerica employees who've been identified at risk after an exposure will be screened and monitored through Vivify, and the care team will monitor their symptoms to intervene as needed.

We plan to roll out Vivify the week of March 30th for patients who've been screened at our ER/facility and then discharged.

How does it work? The employee/patient downloads the Vivify Health app and

then answers simple questions for screening. The app pushes reminders for users to answer questions about their symptoms and enter their temperatures. If symptoms worsen, the Care Assure nurse will direct the employee/patient to the appropriate care setting, including telehealth.



Segregated Triage/Screening

For patients who present at our facilities or ER with suspected COVID-19 symptoms, staff can perform initial triage in an isolated area and enlist a physician consult via telehealth.

Who does this benefit? Not only does this reduce the risk of exposure to other patients and staff, it helps alleviate ER congestion and increase throughput.

How does it work? Physicians can see patients remotely using our approved telehealth devices.



Inpatient and ER

As soon as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced that telehealth privileging requirements were waived, we began making plans to add to our existing 49 telehealth devices throughout our facilities. In the coming weeks we will add 136 additional devices (iPads and other devices) for a total of 190-plus telehealth devices available to providers. HCA Midwest Health cardiology and electrophysiology, Tulane University Medical Group, and many of our PSG and affiliated specialists, emergency room, and hospitalists providers now have access to see patients virtually at our facilities.

Who does this benefit? This enables our staff to perform inpatient and ER rounding using telehealth and will help for the expected surge in patients. It also reduces exposure to both provider and patients, and patients have access to specialists and hospitalists at their fingertips.

How does it work? Providers can remotely consult patients and/or virtually collaborate in multi-specialty rounds via the InTouch Health devices. We have activated over 450 providers to see patients virtually.



Outpatient Teleclinics

We're using a mix of approved technology, including telephone, InTouch Health, FaceTime, Webex, Skype and GoogleMeet, so PSG physicians and specialists can continue seeing patients at home.

Who does this benefit? Patients who may be under stay-at-home orders or those who are immunocompromised who cannot be around others.

How does this work? Depending on the patient and situation, our providers can utilize technology to virtually connect to patients. Our PSG providers, including primary care and specialists, are currently offering video visits through their patient portal or through the current list of approved devices. Included in this launch was HCA Midwest Health Heart and Vascular Specialist and Kansas City Heart Rhythm Institute who have begun seeing patients virtually. All told, in the first three days of launch our PSG providers have had nearly 1,200 telehealth encounters. Our Sarah Cannon Cancer Institute and Tulane University Medical Group providers are both live with their telehealth platform and seeing patients remotely via InTouch Solo. The Transplant Institute at Research Medical Center will launch their virtual visits with InTouch Solo next week. In addition to office visits, we are working to be able to offer patient education virtually for services, such as transplant, bariatric and orthopedics and more.



Care Navigator/Virtual Visits

We've discounted our [Care Navigator Virtual Visits](#) to \$25 for a limited time to help reduce the spread of respiratory illness and alleviate congestion in our hospitals and physician offices.

Who does this benefit? This option is ideal for patients who don't need to leave home or those who may live in an area under stay-at-home orders during the COVID-19 outbreak. They can also take advantage of a free online COVID-19 screening, which we developed based on CDC guidelines.

How does it work? Based on the screening results, patients will be navigated to the appropriate care setting – virtual visit, urgent care or physician practice – based on their symptoms.

I'd like to thank everyone who was involved in quickly working out the details and implementing these important new care options. I'm inspired by how everyone has jumped in, rolled up their sleeves and did whatever needed to be done to accomplish this tremendous effort.

Mel Lagarde
President
HCA MidAmerica Division
