

Albrecht Free Clinic Deploys Telehealth Quickly

to ensure safe, continued care for patients during the pandemic



The Challenge

The Albrecht Free Clinic is a nonprofit that provides medical and dental care to uninsured individuals who live or work in Washington County, Wisconsin, and fall below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. The clinic provides acute, chronic, and dental care, as well as behavioral health screenings for patients. They rely on volunteers and a small, nine-person staff to meet the needs of their patients.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Albrecht Free Clinic stopped seeing patients in-person. They needed an affordable, user-friendly solution that could be implemented quickly in order to continue providing high-quality care to their patients.

"Our last in-person clinic on March 17, 2020 was very challenging because when the day began, we didn't know it would be the last clinic for three months. The onset of COVID caused us to pivot quickly in order to protect volunteers and patients," explained Alissa Mosal, Albrecht Free Clinic Clinical Supervisor.

"Our staff was furloughed with the exception of myself, our executive director, and the volunteer physicians. During that time, all care happened over the phone. Patients would call the clinic and be triaged, and then I would reach out to the providers. It was a difficult, time-consuming process. While we were all working hard to do what we could, we were worried because we couldn't look at our patients' faces. We needed help," stated Mosal.

Key Statistics



31,590

West Bend Population



Poverty statistics

8%

Below FPL



255

Medical Patients



5

Providers

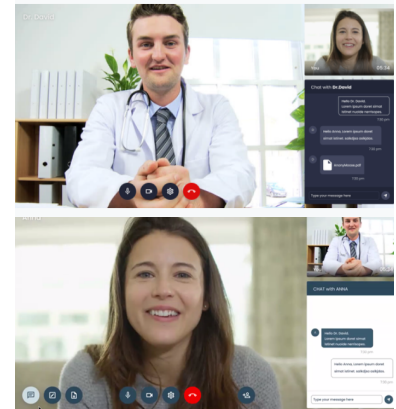


"We were worried because we couldn't look at our patients' faces. We needed help," stated Mosal.

The Solution

Doug McManus, MD, a volunteer at the clinic and a board member for ThriveHealth, set up a conversation between the two organizations in April 2020 to discuss the implementation of telehealth services. Because the platform is web-based and therefore does not require downloads or installation, the Albrecht Free Clinic quickly began piloting the platform with two physicians and five patients in May.

As of February 2021, five providers and 35 patients are experiencing the benefits of iThryve™ telehealth. “It was so rewarding to see the patients on the screen and have safe, human interaction during a time when so much was unknown. ThriveHealth helped us give better care,” Mosal said. “Now that the clinic has reopened, telehealth still provides a wonderful, safe option for both our providers and patients.”



Provider perspective

According to Doug McManus, MD, iThryve™ telehealth is an effective way to provide care. “The video quality is clear and bright. I can write medical notes and bring other people, such as an interpreter, into the conversation. That is a great function. The platform allows me to send files directly to the patients and upload videos for the waiting room.”

Patient benefits

Convenient: ThriveHealth helped Albrecht Free Clinic connect with patients when the clinic was closed. When the clinic reopened, it continued to help patients that could not get to the clinic, whether it was because of transportation issues, work, or they were too sick to travel.

Easy to use: There are no downloads. A simple click on an invitation makes it easy to start a session. Patients have the option to receive the medical visit invitation through a text message on their phone or via email. Patients can use the camera on a phone or a web camera on the computer.

High quality: The video image is bright and the audio is clear making patients and providers comfortable.

“ThriveHealth is a fantastic service that allows our providers to safely and effectively care for patients. By adding telehealth to our services, the Albrecht Free Clinic will be able to help more patients receive the care they require,” said Mosal.