

Sound Physicians/VA Telehealth

Digital Marketing Plan
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Prepared by:
Thea Peters

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Executive summary

Sound Physicians has worked to have a reputation that encompasses their vision of being “a world-class medical group that improves quality and reduces the cost of healthcare for patients in every community we serve” (Sound Physicians 2023b) and their mission of working to “measurably improve quality, satisfaction, and financial performance of healthcare delivery through exceptional patient care, deep investments in our people, and performance management expertise, as well as complete alignment with our partners” (Sound Physicians, 2023b). As a managed care entity Sound Physicians has a few competitors, however, Sound Physicians has set themselves up as the leader in the managed healthcare community. Current services lines cover the acute episode of care such as emergency room, critical care, hospital inpatient, and recently the additions of telemedicine, anaesthesia services and value-based partnerships, as well as physician advisory services. (Sound Physicians 2023b).

The new proposed service line is working with the Veterans Administration (VA) facilities to further improve the healthcare received by our country’s veterans. The proposal is to work with the VA’s internal patient advocacy team to further assist veteran patients in receiving the care they need. Implementing this service line will feed into Sound Physicians’ mission to improve the quality of healthcare for the patient. Current VA internal patient advocates receive information from the patient and then go through the hoops required by VA regulations to try and help the patient resolve issues. The one problem is that patient advocates do not have formal medical training and are unable to determine if the treatment resolution is one that would be appropriate for the patient and their condition.

The SWOT analysis indicates that Sound Physicians would be able to handle adding the additional service line with their existing business. Despite some internal challenges of learning how to operate inside the VA with federal regulations and still in the recovery phase

after Covid-19, this would be a beneficial service line to adopt. The proven track record by the Revenue Cycle team of adapting to the additional workflow of a new service line is a high point in the strengths section. Coupled with the company's corporate culture of working to enhance and improve healthcare, the external challenges such as having to work within the confines of the VA facilities and federal regulations, and potential pushback from the VA's internal patient advocate group should be minimized overall. A test market of Central Florida was chosen which would get Sound Physicians in on the ground floor of a large population base as well as challenges with a small facility structure.

For the Central Florida market, we need to consider Southern Georgia also as the VA system handles Southern Georgia, Northern and Central Florida. It is recommended that marketing be done along the major traffic corridors such as I-10, I-95 and I-75 in Northern and Central Florida, and I-95 and I-75 in Southern Georgia. Strategic smaller traffic corridors can also be utilized to market to those that may avoid taking the interstate. Once the partnership has been solidified, we can begin reviewing strategic locations in market areas for billboard marketing. Radio ads are also another viable form of marketing to people while they are driving. Looking at popular radio stations in Orlando, Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Tallahassee for Florida, and for Georgia review for stations in the Atlanta and Macon areas that extend into Southern Georgia.

Introduction

Sound Physicians has a proven track record of introducing value to new markets. One of those new markets is Telehealth. With the advent of the recent pandemic, Sound Physicians has massively expanded their telehealth network and now dozens of providers are available to assist patients through an on-call basis. These are both currently practicing physicians as well as dedicated telehealth providers. These providers offer their expertise covering a variety of specialties including, but not limited to, Hospital medicine, Critical care, and potential anaesthesia needs. They offer their recommendations, create treatment plans, and also offer medication management for a variety of patient populations.

Partnering the Veteran Administration (VA) providers with Sound Physicians advisory services and telehealth network of providers would be a great expansion of the diagnostic options available to our country's veteran population. In the past couple of decades due to the Gulf War there has been an exponential growth in the number of veterans being treated by a VA system created in the 1930s that has not been able to expand with the growing number of the population that has complex medical needs. We see the partnership as a two-prong approach. The 1st prong of the approach would be aimed at the VA providers, while the 2nd prong of the approach would be aimed at the patient population.

Within the 1st prong of the telehealth approach the providers, either the primary care or specialty department, would upload all pertinent information to a portal for the telehealth provider to review. The telehealth provider would then review the documentation, ask for additional information if needed, and make their recommendations for an on-going treatment plan, help to finalize a diagnosis, or provide support for the VA providers diagnosis. The 2nd prong of the approach would allow patients access to the telehealth provider as well; This could be for medication evaluations and renewals, annual exams, minor problems that just need a consultation and further recommendations.

Adding Sound Physicians telehealth as an option for both providers and patients will help to ease the burden on an overwhelmed VA system, allow veterans to receive their care in a timely manner and receive care that is tailored to their needs and not the needs of the VA system. A satellite benefit that could also be seen is easing the burden on overwhelmed patient advocates as there are fewer issues that would be brought to them, and they would be able to focus more on each issue that arises.

Analyses

PEST analysis

Political Factors

- Federal health facilities with federal guidelines regarding veteran healthcare and policies
- Many regulation changes based on who is in office.

Economic Factors

- Low provider population vs. high patient population
- Sound Physicians financial recovery after Covid-19 pandemic

Social Factors

- High population growth among veterans based on test area.
- VA tends to view “second opinion” as a dirty word.
- VA is a closed system and does not often reach out.
- Largely retired population base and may not understand technology needed for virtual visit.

Technology Factors

- Currently segmented EMR – Each region has their own system; DoD is in the process of streamlining all EMR access to one EMR
- Once expanded to additional markets, providers working directly with patient could have multiple EMR accesses to manage.
- Due to the older patient population visual telehealth visits could be impacted by non-technology-based clientele.

Service area competitor analysis

The North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System (NF/SGVHS) is the largest healthcare system in the country and spans 40,000 square miles. The facilities included are 2 medical centers, a 45-bed domiciliary, 3 multi-specialty outpatient clinics, and 9 community-based outpatient clinics. In addition, they are expanding to add additional clinics in Jacksonville Florida and Gainesville Florida. Their website indicates that in 2021 there are over 176 thousand patients and 1.9 million outpatient encounters (*About Us/VA North Florida/South Georgia Health Care |Veterans Affairs, 2022*). Reviewing 2017-2021 US census data just for the Central Florida area, there are 14,859 identified veterans in The Villages and in Gainesville there are 6,157 veterans (United States Census Bureau QuickFacts, n.d.). While not all of them are going to utilize services at the VA facilities, approximately 62% of veterans have utilized VA services since October 2021 (US Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, n.d.).



According to the 2021 annual report 28% of the patient population is in the 65-74 age group with the next highest at 20% being in the 55-64 age group. The Center in Ocala which was slated to open January 2022 would include telehealth services, however, the telehealth providers are only available until 4:30pm Monday through Saturday and not at all on Sunday. In a spotlight segment in the 2021 annual report on their telehealth department it was noted that there was an 87% increase in the usage of virtual services by veterans during the pandemic with an average of 580 daily virtual appointments. It appears many of the services may be related to medication refills which could also be done on the VA portal MyHealthyVet. The direct internal competitor for Sound Physicians would be the VISN 8 clinical Contact Center which is open 24/7 and is utilized for urgent care services (*U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021*).

There does not appear to be anyone else looking at entering the VA telehealth space and given the complexities of working with the federal government, additional entities entering this space would be slim. As we would be looking to work alongside the current VA system and provide additional services to assist providers as well, there would be no

substitutes to what Sound Physicians would be able to offer in this partnership. There is the potential for an internal rivalry between VA employees and Sound Physicians employees as Sound Physicians would be coming in as the outsider to an established system.

SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis was used to review Sound Physicians' environment. The table below has a summary of our strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and potential threats to the new service line. Internal strengths were based on the department that would have the highest impact from adding a new service line. Revenue Cycle has a proven track record of being given a new service line and being able to dig into the specifics and integrate the new workflow into their current processes. Our company culture embodies our vision of being a "world-class medical group that improves quality and reduces the cost of healthcare for patients in every community we serve" (Sound Physicians, 2023b).

Utilizing our current work force of former military members will be a benefit and help us to overcome the weakness of being unfamiliar with the Veterans Administration (VA) practices of working with patients. The additional hurdle we are facing right now is still being in the recovery phase after Covid-19. We still have some significant financial hurdles to overcome, however, since this is an untapped market for us as a company this service line is a benefit in the long term.

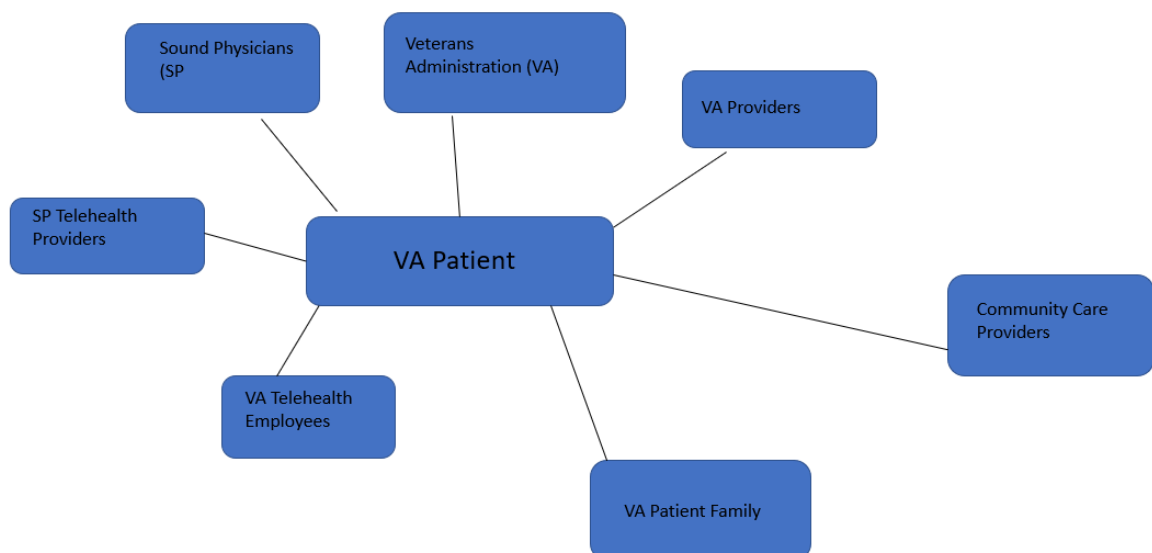
Our test market of Central Florida has one of the largest veteran population groups, however, has one of the smaller VA facility networks and so is understaffed and overpopulated which can work to our advantage. With our proven track record of being able to review a service line and make improvements that benefit the patient both in the quality of care they receive as well as the costs that they must pay we feel that this will be a beneficial partnership and would lead to additional partnerships within the VA and federal government as a whole. Table 1 shows the identified internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and possible threats to the service line.

Table 1

<p style="text-align: center;">I N T E R N A L</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company structure that gives flexibility to learning new service lines. • Desire to have a positive impact on patient populations. • Departments impacted by additional service line have a proven history of being given a project and excelling at the integration into their current workflow. • Corporate culture of reviewing a service line and enhancing it to benefit the patient. • Currently employ several former members of the military to be able to add expertise and experiences with facilities. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfamiliarity with VA practices • Recovering financially after Covid-19 pandemic. • Ability to hire enough staff to cover the new service line may be impacted by financial recovery. • Revenue Cycle staff short-staffed and at max capacity. • Biller not completing charges in a timely manner could conflict with timelines from the VA. • Potential internal viewpoint regarding working with the military. • Challenges learning hierarchy within VA facilities.
<p style="text-align: center;">E X T E R N A L</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test area has a large patient population that utilize the VA facilities. • Opportunity to positively impact an untapped market. • Internal patient advocacy overworked and understaffed. • Providers want to help patients but are constrained by federal regulations 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working within the confines of the VA facilities and government regulations. • Pushback from internal to VA advocacy programs. • Providers resistant to external advocate accompanying patient. • Pushback from the government on an outside entity entering VA space.

Stakeholder analysis

This analysis was written from the perspective of a person who both works for Sound Physicians (SP) and is familiar with the impact that the company can provide and as a family member of a veteran utilizing the services at the Veteran's Administration (VA) in the proposed test area. Overall, there is a limited number of stakeholders for this service line, the top 3 stakeholders are VA patients, Sound Physicians, and the Veterans Administration. However, the VA patient is the most important stakeholder as this service line would directly impact their care, both treatment and available services. All Stake holders identified have an almost equal stake in this partnership, there are 2, VA Patient Family and Community Care Provider, that have a more remote stake in the partnership, however, it is still an important stake. As detailed in the image below:



The table1 lists the stakeholders and defines their role in the partnership.

Table 1: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Definition
VA Patient	Veteran utilizing VA services for their healthcare
Sound Physicians	Entity providing support for Telehealth and primary care providers
Veterans Administration (VA)	Entity providing services to veterans
VA Providers	Providers within the VA region
SP Telehealth providers	Providers employed by Sound Physicians
VA Telehealth employees	Employed by the VA currently working in Telehealth call center
VA Patient Family	Family members of veterans utilizing VA services
Community Care Providers	Providers in the community who accept VA patients into their practice for non-continuous services

As stated previously the top 3 stakeholders are VA patients, Sound Physicians, Veterans Administration (VA). The VA patients are the primary stakeholder as their care is the most impacted by this partnership. While Sound Physicians and the Veterans Administration have an equal stake in the partnership, and are important as they are the service providers, both are accountable to the patient engaging in services by both entities. VA providers and SP Telehealth Providers are very close to the top of the stakeholder list as they are both directly impacted by the new partnership. The VA provider will receive a benefit from having an additional source to review diagnostic information and make better-informed decisions regarding the VA patient's care.

However, the SP Telehealth provider will be impacted by an increase in the amount of documentation available for review although this route will review and make

recommendations without direct patient interaction needed for the SP Telehealth provider. VA patient family and Community Care Providers are indirectly impacted but still have an important role. VA patient families will be able to see their loved one receive care that has been tailored for the individual needs of the veteran. While Community Care Providers should start to see a slight reduction in the number of referrals needing community care services which will help to ease the patient load burden for these providers.

Planning

Market segmentation

The VA treats patients at all stages of life and ages, from active duty to disabled veterans, and retired veterans, all with different care needs. When reviewing the population that would be impacted by a partnership between Sound Physicians and the VA, we need to look at the ages of the veterans in the test area. In the North Florida/South George (NV/SGVA) region there is a wide range of ages. Per the 2021 annual report they are as follows:

- <25 – 1%
 - 25-34 – 6%
 - 34-44 – 9%
 - 45-54 – 13%
 - 55-64 – 20%
 - 65-74 – 28%
 - 75-84 – 17%
 - 85+ - 6%
- (US Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, 2021)

When looking at the larger demographics of the veteran population it is estimated that by 2024 52% of the overall veteran population will be over 65 years of age. With age comes complex physical and mental health issues that need to be addressed. Older veterans are facing other stressors such as chronic conditions, frailty, cognitive issues, heart disease, and other diseases affecting physical functioning. Some of the issues affecting veterans of all ages, however, primarily younger veterans, are substance use disorders (SUDs), PTSD, TBI, depression, high risk of suicide – on average 18-22 veterans commit

suicide daily, chronic pain issues, have experienced amputations, require rehabilitation care, have had hazardous exposures to chemicals, and experiences homelessness (O'Malley et al., 2020).

Mao et al. (2022) wrote an article for JMIR Aging detailing barriers to telehealth usage by older adults, some of those barriers are hearing difficulties, being unfamiliar with technology, language barriers, unsure how to be connected to telehealth platforms, and a lack of desire to see providers outside of a clinic setting. Most, if not all of these could be mitigated by ensuring that patients have hearing devices that connect to their phones allowing them to hear better, providing clear instructions on how to connect to a provider (for visual telehealth visits), and continuing to provide in person visits for those that feel the need to see their provider in person.

Targeting the telehealth services to the younger generation of veterans should receive a greater response in usage as younger generations are more apt to go to a virtual option vs. an in-person option if they can. With younger veterans utilizing telehealth services, in-person services are then freed up for the other veteran population that might struggle with utilizing telehealth services. In addition, with higher suicide rates for younger veterans (Mao et al. 2022), having additional telehealth providers available should allow for an increase in overall care which could help to reduce the number of calls flowing into the suicide hotline as vets will begin to feel that that are receiving the care that they need.

Gap analysis

Measurement	Baseline	Goal	Gap
Utilization of Telehealth Services	87%	95%	8%
Staff utilized	Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Pharmacists, Physicians – approximately 50	Add additional staff – up to 50	50
Services provided – direct to patient	Mental Health, Stress management, whole health coaching, medication management	Virtual clinic visits, annual virtual exams, Mental Health, Stress management, whole health coaching, medication management	2 services provided
Services provider – direct to providers	None	Diagnostic capabilities for review of complex cases	100%
Reduction in veteran suicide	6,146 in 2020 (16.8 daily average) (U.S Department of Veteran Affairs, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, 2022)	Daily average of 2	14

This is a unique service line proposal and so the metrics evaluated are unique in nature as well. Given the population age and complexity of medical conditions within the test market we cannot guarantee 100% participation in telehealth services. The VA currently

utilizes a variety of medical staff to service their telehealth patients. Sound Physicians goal is not to change the staff but to add to the staffing of the VA telehealth clinic to increase the number of veterans that can be served by the partnership. Adding the ability to provide virtual clinic visit and annual exams in a virtual format allow for a greater variety of patients that would utilize the telehealth center. Currently, there are no additional services being offered to the VA providers. By adding this prong to the service line would greatly increase the care that veterans can receive and ease the burnout burden on VA physicians. When discussing a reduction in veteran suicides there has been a huge focus on the veteran suicide rate. While the number has fallen by 343 in 2019, the number in 2020 was 6,146 suicides across the veteran population. Having access to another avenue to receive help for mental health issues that could contribute to thoughts of suicide can only be beneficial towards helping to reduce the number of veteran suicides.

Digital marketing audit

I reviewed both entities due to the nature of this service line being a partnership between the 2 entities, both entities would want to market this service as it enhances both businesses.

Website

Sound Physicians has a dedicated Telemedicine page on their website easily found under the specialties dropdown link. This page details some of the highlights of the telemedicine program such as 12,000 connections per month, 96% of connections resulting in treatment in place, and a 30% average reduction in readmissions to hospital services (Sound Physicians, 2023a). They also detail some of the services Sound Physicians offers under the telemedicine umbrella such as after-hours physicians services, emergency department transfer management, proactive virtual rounding, cross-coverage support for medical directors and attendings, hospital alignment and strategic support for operators

(Sound Physicians, 2023a). There are also videos and links to a client portal if you are a current client, and a link to request more information regarding telemedicine services.

The North Florida/South Georgia VA website is a bit more cumbersome to navigate to find information regarding telemedicine services. Clicking on the health services links leads to a long list of services offered at various locations. Telehealth is found down at the bottom under the title of 'other services'. Clicking the plus sign to drop down the information for the VA's telehealth services you see a list of locations where telehealth services are offered and what services are offered such as mental health, retinal care, bariatric surgery (before and after visits with provider), dermatology, rehabilitation, and primary care (*Health Services | VA North Florida/South Georgia Health Care | Veterans Affairs*, n.d.). There is a link to learn more about telehealth services which gives more information regarding telehealth services that the VA offers. Down at the bottom of this page is a 'see how it works' link under the title of 'How VA Telehealth Works'

That gives details at a local, regional and national level.

SEO and online ads

When searching for online information regarding Sound Physicians and VA telehealth services neither entity comes up on the top of the search. Both entities should leverage SEO to have a larger presence in telehealth to further the knowledge of their telemedicine presence. With the advent of telehealth services being wanted, optimizing SEO to be at the top of searching would be a boon to both entities.

Email Marketing

Both websites do not have a specific place to sign up for email information. Sound Physicians has client portals and places to request more information but no email distribution list. The VA does have a veterans newsletter what goes more into general information and not medical center specific as it goes into laws that have passed and what businesses are

giving discounts on holidays. Both entities would benefit from an email campaign to highlight services such as telehealth.

Content Marketing

Sound Physicians has vast amount of content on their website that encompasses their wide range of services from hospital medicine to telemedicine, anaesthesia and critical care services. In their Insite and Resources page you can get to the blog, case studies that have been done, see the podcasts for critical care and a general podcast, as well as press releases and webinars that company leaders have been involved with. There is not a specific spot to go to filter to just information on one service line, however, what is there goes back for several years and gives a wealth of information to sift through. The VA website is not as robust in this area. There is a new releases link and a stories link that gives some information, but it is about the VA as a whole and again is not specific to telemedicine. Sound Physicians could benefit from sorting their information into service line specific so if someone wants to read all the information about telemedicine or hospital medicine they can do so. The VA would benefit from increasing the robustness of their website by including a blog and podcasts and providing more information regarding services in that aspect.

Social Media

I reviewed Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for both Sound Physicians and the VA for their social media presence. Sound has a robust Facebook page and while their Twitter page looks to be a repeat of the Facebook page it has been updated frequently as well. Sound Physicians does not have an Instagram presence and could be an avenue for an additional social media presence for the company overall, not just for telehealth services. Both social media aspect are general to the company and not specific to telehealth services. The VA has a Facebook page that is general to the VA as a whole and as far back as I could find there was nothing specific to telehealth services. There is not an Instagram or North Florida/South Georgia Twitter account although there are general Veterans Administration

Twitter accounts. Both entities could benefit from advertising telehealth services on social media and optimizing that aspect

Marketing framework

Goals	Activity Type	Action	Measurement
Optimize marketing resources already available Sound physicians	SEO	Prioritize keywords indicated on website based on commonly searched terms	Measure traffic to website from web searches using algorithms available within search engine
	Content Marketing	Ensure that website is highlighting both telehealth services as well as partnership with the VA and that telehealth services information and blogs are in one location and easy to find	Review of how to find information as well as exit surveys on website to track the number of users that were able to find the information that they were looking for
	Social Media	Utilize current social media presence on Facebook and Twitter to announce the partnership with the VA and give further details regarding services provided in partnership	Use of surveys to indicate how the patient learned of the services and how easy the information they needed was to find
Optimize marketing resources already available – VA	SEO	Prioritize keywords indicated on website based on commonly searched terms	Measure traffic to website from web searches using algorithms available within search engine
	Website	Ensure that the VA region website highlights their telehealth services as well as the partnership with Sound Physicians	Perform reviews on ease of finding information, as well as exit surveys on website to track the number of users that were able to find the

			information that they were looking for
	Content Marketing	Work to streamline website as well as create a dedicated, easily found, page for telehealth services that highlights the partnership with Sound Physicians and the services they will be providing	Exit survey on website that tracks the number of users that were able to find the information that they were looking for
Create new avenues to advertise services and partnership – Sound Physicians	Social Media	Add additional social media presence on Instagram to create awareness of overall services as well as telehealth partnership with VA	Survey to indicate how the patient heard of the partnership
	Content Marketing	Look at new opportunities to advertise to the Veteran population such as local Gun and Knife Shows that have both veteran and civilian visitors to create a larger patient base across the company	Have a code on flyers and advertising information to indicate the patient heard about services from the shows
	Content Marketing	Digital billboard advertisement in high traffic areas of the areas in North Florida and South Georgia that utilize the VA system to create interest in the partnership	Do exit surveys to track where visitors learned of telehealth services
	Email & Text	Create an email marketing system to allow people to sign	Once-a-year survey to track how many people are utilizing

		up for email newsletters that would highlight new ventures – such as the partnership with the VA and bring traffic to the blog which highlights all the work the providers are doing	services they have learned about via the newsletter
Create new avenues to advertise services and partnership – Va	Social Media	Create VA region specific social media presence on Facebook and Twitter to advertise the services available as well as to highlight the telehealth services and the partnership	Track unique visits to the websites via algorithms in website developer tools
	Content Marketing	The larger VA system sends a newsletter to all veterans that have signed up for it. Be sure to have an article that highlights the regions telehealth services and discusses the partnership	While doing surveys track how many people learned of the services via the newsletter
	Email & Text	All veterans are asked for their email address. Do a once-a-year email marketing campaign to inform veterans utilizing the regional VA of the partnership	While doing surveys track how many people learned of the services via the email campaign

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the visit and use data will require collaboration on the numbers between Sound Physicians and the VA as both entities will be tracking different data points. Having the same exit surveys on their websites and making sure that data collected is the same is going to be key to ensuring that the marketing portion of the partnership is strong and able to pivot as needed as this is a very targeted patient base. For the first year, starting in month 2, collaboration on data should happen monthly to ensure that the marketing is reaching the intended target as well as increasing traffic to the telehealth center. Additional monitoring should be put into place for the 2-prong approach to track the number of providers utilizing Sound Physicians advisory services as well as the change in the patient care plan based on the recommendations made by the Sound Physicians providers.

When coming to these collaborations both entities should have data relating to the number of unique visits to their websites - gathered from search engine algorithms and exit surveys on websites. There should also be data from both entities in regard to the advisory services on the number of requests from VA providers and fulfilled requests from Sound Physicians providers along with data on average response times from both providers. The VA should also be able to provide care plan changes and add additional information to help pivot marketing plans to the providers on the VA side as needed. After the first 7 months of the partnership and collaboration on the numbers it could be discussed about moving the meetings to a quarterly aspect as the basics of the marketing plan should be in place. These quarterly meetings would hold the same information presented with more data available.

Potential contingency plans if the numbers are not trending up on the utilization of telehealth services by patients would be to increase the email marketing campaign to 4 times a year vs. 2 and looking at analogue marketing options such as flyers and brochures to be placed in clinics and specialty office – this analogue marketing would be available as part of the campaign to add on the ground marketing at gun and knife shows. Increasing the

use of digital billboards in more areas of the test area could also be utilized. When reviewing website use data, comparisons should be made between the two websites to ensure that changes can be made to streamline the process of finding information for the visitor. Both entities may need to adjust their websites as well as marketing campaigns based on the information presented. Comparing Sound Physicians and VA websites could also be done with other leading healthcare facilities in the test market area to contrast on ease of use, ease of finding information, and increase in use of services. The VA may be limited on what changes can be made due to being a federal entity with potential federal requirements for what can and cannot be available on the website.

When marketing the advisory services to VA providers an initial meeting should be held that details the services available and the process. If the numbers are not trending to this being a highly utilized option additional information should be requested from providers as to barriers in utilizing the advisory services. Those barriers should be analysed to determine what can be overcome, mitigated, or ones that cannot be overcome. A follow-up meeting should be scheduled after changes are implemented to ensure that providers are utilizing Sound Physicians advisory services.

Conclusion

Overall, I feel this could be a lucrative marketing plan and partnership for Sound Physicians and the VA. Utilizing the recommendations in the test market area of North Florida/South Georgia for the VA region should allow for the telehealth plan to reach across the country. Specific items do need to be addressed on both sides, as mentioned optimizing keywords to ensure that both websites are on the top of search lists is needed. In addition, robust marketing that meets the target population at their level is key.

Digital billboards, gun and knife shows, email marketing campaigns to bring in the middle to older population and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to bring in the younger population will increase the knowledge and traffic to the telehealth

center. Marketing the 1st prong of the approach to the providers may prove to be more difficult, initial meetings should be held to introduce the services to providers and highlight the benefits and have time to ask questions, as well as follow-up surveys to highlight any barriers to usage are going to be key with this prong of the partnership.

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