



Vidyo-Enhanced Ochsner Telehealth Program Drives 100% Spike in Telestroke Evaluations, 50% Decrease in Length of ER Stays



4000 telemedicine visits in seven months

50% reduction in ER length of stay

100% increase in telestroke evaluations over the last two years



ABOUT ORGANIZATION

Ochsner Health System is Louisiana’s largest private not-for-profit healthcare system, encompassing 30 owned, managed and affiliated hospitals and more than 80 neighborhood health centers and urgent care centers. It is also one of the country’s largest non-university based academic medical centers. It employs more than 19,000 employees and more than 1,200 physicians in over 90 medical specialties and subspecialties.

FOUNDED: 1942

HEADQUARTERS: Jefferson, LA

Challenge

Ochsner Health System began its virtual care program, CareConnect 360, in 2009. As the program scaled, Ochsner wanted higher clarity in audio and visual capabilities to reach new partners in remote places domestically and internationally. Additionally, Ochsner wanted sufficient capacity to increase the size of its network and the number of people it serves by bringing healthcare directly to patients via desktop in their home or on their mobile devices.

“When you’re evaluating a patient for acute stroke, time is of the essence. Having the flexibility with regard to supported devices, so that we can evaluate patients more rapidly, is very critical. Time saved is brain saved.”

-Richard Zweifler, M.D.
Ochsner’s System Chair of Neurology

Solution

According to April Vanek Radford, vice president of Ochsner's CareConnect 360 telemedicine division, Vidyo was selected because of its ability to provide clinical quality video in low bandwidth environments. This addressed Ochsner's objective to deliver health services to rural areas beset with inconsistent connectivity.

Radford noted that the conversion to Vidyo was very simple. "It took us about a minute and a half to download the software and approximately three weeks to convert across our network of 80-plus locations." The technology is used across many settings, including in Ochsner's telestroke division, which has practiced digital care for a long time.

Ochsner deployed cloud-based VidyoConnect, addressing its objective to connect with patients across multiple platforms. Richard Zweifler, M.D., Ochsner's system chair of neurology, noted that Vidyo offers physicians the capability to perform video consultations via an iPad or a smartphone. Its former video vendor did not offer this device flexibility.

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Results

Since deploying Vidyo, Ochsner has conducted approximately 4,000 virtual care visits in telestroke, acute care, telepsychiatry, and with patients in their homes.

Since 2009, the telestroke program had averaged over 1,000 annual telestroke evaluations. However, after just seven months, the program is already on pace to deliver 3,300 to 3,400 virtual consultations in its first year with Vidyo. According to Zweifler, this is a more than 100% increase over the most recent two years. Additionally, Ochsner reduced its telepsychiatry patient length of stay in the emergency department by about 50%.

"It's quite amazing for physicians to be at the bedside within seconds where we can often gather medical history from the family members while the patient is getting a CT scan or something. So there's a lot of work we can do to streamline the very time-sensitive evaluation," Zweifler said.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Radford said that she sees a future with Vidyo in expanding Ochsner's services. She noted how Vidyo will allow the facility to move into other settings, like post-acute care, nursing, and assisted living. "Those are spaces that we don't have today, but now we're allowed the opportunity to go to those areas."

This was evident with a patient who had a stroke at age 36. The very active married mother of two young children was rushed to her local hospital and immediately had a digital health consult with an Ochsner neurologist. She said the virtual care contributed to "saving her future."

Ochsner conducts surveys with the hospital's partners after Vidyo deployment to assess video and audio quality, the overall implementation, ease of use, and satisfaction from the providers, administrators, and patients. That feedback has specifically cited the clarity of the video content and its details, as well as audio factors.

"Our overall experience with Vidyo has been very positive," Radford said, "from the immediate relationships that were made with the teams that we interact with, from the sales team to the implementation team. We've had success in growing our business because of the dependability and the scalability of the Vidyo solution."



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