

**Telemedicine Specialty Consultative Services**  
Rochester General Hospital

**Year the Initiative Began:**  
2005

**Program Description:**

Rochester General Hospital's initiative provides multi-specialty, consultative outpatient services to patients residing in rural and urban clinics, inpatient consults including Tele-intensive care unit (ICU) services for two affiliate hospitals; and inpatient consults at skilled nursing facilities both in rural and urban communities.

The following specialties are enlisted in telemedicine consultations:

- Bariatric Psychology
- Dentistry
- Endocrinology
- Genetic Counseling
- Gynecology
- Infectious Disease
- Intensivist/Critical Care
- Nephrology
- Plastics Surgery including wound care
- Pulmonary
- Psychiatry
- Urology
- Vascular

Additionally, Rochester General is piloting a tele-home care program to reduce readmissions for patients with active congestive heart failure (CHF). This includes managed care that integrates teach-back with patients and care givers, using the same education material and handoffs to the patients, physicians, and care managers at the time of discharge.

**Key Lessons Learned:**

- You must be aligned with the goals of the health care organization and implement applications as needed.
- You need a physician champion.
- Patient experience is key; care must be seamless and produce the same outcomes as a "live" patient consult.
- Consistency with each specialty is important.
- Be flexible and willing to think "outside of the box."

**Outcomes:**

- The tele-ICU application has demonstrated a decrease in length of stay in the ICU, the rural hospital transfer rate to tertiary hospital has declined, and multi-disciplinary rounding has increased the level of knowledge for the rural ICU staff.
- Patients in skilled nursing facilities have been able to stay at their facilities and not been burdened with being transported to a physician's office. This impacts patient satisfaction as well as safety.
- Patients in rural settings have had the opportunity to receive specialized care earlier because of the convenience of location of the telemedicine services.

**Published Research:**

Dragan Golijanin, Jonah Marshall, Louis Eichel, John R. Valvo, Ralph R. Madeb. The Creation of a Cyber-Hospital: A Healthcare Strategy and Delivery Network for Regionalization of Urologic Specialty Care. Podium Presentation: 35th Annual AUA, April 25-30, 2009. Journal of urology Vol 181 (supplement 4); p537.

Ralph Madeb, Amy Craib, John R. Valvo, Cynthia Gordon, Sandeep Krishnan, Ralph Pennino. The Creation of a Cyber-Hospital: A Healthcare Strategy and Delivery Network for Regionalization of Specialty Care. podium presentation: 13th Annual American Telemedicine Association; Abstract 470, 2008; Telemedicine and e-Health; Volume 14 (supplement 1) page 51.

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