

10 Principles

to Start Rock Solid Telemedicine Programs

Few telemedicine programs enjoy the success that the University of Mississippi Medical Center has been able to achieve. Here are 10 principles that Kristi Henderson, DNP, Chief Telehealth & Innovation Officer, says you need to implement for a rock solid telemedicine program.

1 Solutions Based on Needs



People need turnkey solutions that are “right-sized” for them. Listen to doctors and patients to develop a telemedicine system that fills in the healthcare gaps and builds upon what is already in place.

2 Form Partnerships



Partner with communities. Show them the value that comes with a new telemedicine service line. These partnerships are vital to grow healthcare access points with broadband capability.

3 Think Outside the Box



Partnerships are often composed of both public and private groups and can be valuable allies to proactively analyze where next to go with a telemedicine program. Think outside the box to start integrating telemedicine into your practice.

4 Become a Telemedicine Leader



Leverage the trust and experience you have within the community. Both within the United States and around the world, telemedicine is a relatively new concept that is challenging the dynamics of healthcare delivery. Build upon your established reputation to help craft policies that support sustainable telemedicine models.

5 Acquire Grants and Contracts



Grants can provide seed money for telemedicine start-ups, but they will not sustain programs. Look to develop non-traditional contracts that make sense to all parties.

6 Integrate Intelligently



Integrate telemedicine services within the current healthcare model. Connected health programs must fit into the existing clinical workflow. Having the correct data and analytics to support you is vital during this process.

7 Research ROI



Consider ROI from the outset. Return on Investment is a combination of revenues received for service, increased access to care and improved outcomes. Look at the total cost of care per patient to assess the benefit telemedicine.

8 Scrutinize the Analytics



Telemedicine service lines can improve healthcare access, but make sure you have calculations and analytics of the economic impact to justify it.

9 Start Small Win Big



Start with the easier wins. Some settings, like correctional facilities, are easier to justify for telemedicine programs because the benefits they provide (such as timely care to inmates and reduced security risks to the general population) are easy to demonstrate.

10 Work with Experienced Professionals



Standardize your equipment with a proven telemedicine vendor, preferably one that has a proven track record of integrating the medical devices utilized for services with an intuitive software that can be readily used by multiple providers at various sites.

After evaluating many vendors, Dr. Henderson chose to partner with GlobalMed. To date, UMMC has utilized GlobalMed solutions for 35 medical specialties at 177 access points in partnerships with communities throughout Mississippi. UMMC uses GlobalMed's ClinicalAccess® Stations with eNcounter® software. Dr. Henderson "really likes the quality of the images and storage capabilities and the eNcounter workflow." The UMMC Telemedicine Program also utilizes the Transportable Exam Station for natural disasters and has earmarked its use in infectious disease situations (such as Ebola) where it is important to minimize traffic and exposure.



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