Moving Forward with Telehealth

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unforeseen challenges, obstacles, and even opportunities to Pueblo Community Health Center (PCHC). The organization, with an eye on continuous and uninterrupted care for patients, has rolled with the punches and made quick decisions about how to accomplish that in uncertain times. In a matter of one week, PCHC adapted, and providers began to “see” their patients via telehealth visits.

Telehealth consists of providers offering visits over the phone, or with the addition of video, to continue to meet the needs of patients when in-person visits cannot occur. Telehealth with video has allowed face-to-face interaction while maintaining social distancing and privacy for patients.

With concerns about COVID-19 transmission since March, many patients have needed medical or behavioral health assistance but have not felt comfortable receiving in-person care. The behavioral health team has assisted many new patients via the remote option who have been struggling with COVID-19-related anxiety and stress. The opportunity to add telehealth visits has enabled patients to safely access much needed medical and behavioral interventions.

For PCHC, technology has been shown to improve the accessibility of quality health care in times of unforeseen challenges. While still too new to predict future impact, the use of telehealth may provide opportunities to make health care more efficient, better coordinated, and certainly closer to home. PCHC will continue offering visits and dedicating resources to telehealth so patients can continue experiencing high quality, trustworthy care they have come to expect.
Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

It should be no surprise for me to tell you that Pueblo Community Health Center adopted telehealth secondary to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just about all health care providers have shifted to telehealth in some form. Health care providers function in a system that is generally slow to change, however telehealth appeared rapidly. At PCHC we adopted it in less than a week.

I would say we adopted it effectively because we have been able to provide good access. Telehealth has been essential to meeting patient needs because a shortage of personal protective equipment has been a barrier to in person care. A survey asking about experiences with telehealth revealed that patients feel PCHC is providing them with care when they need it 98% of the time. Patients also reported that their caregivers are meeting their needs 95% of the time.

Early in the pandemic, telehealth was 75% of visit activity. Heading into the fall it is about 50% and will decrease further as we head into cold and flu season. Patients need a physical exam for certain conditions and needs, and much of the preventive health screening and services we provide must be delivered in-person, i.e., immunizations, cancer screening. Our OB and dental programs are nearly all in person care, whereas almost all mental health visits have been offered via telehealth.

Telehealth is not a panacea. Patients appreciate it for what it is: a convenient way to “see” their provider when they have a need. It will continue beyond the pandemic, and it will be used to good effect. However, we are hearing that patients are eager to return to in-person care and miss the interpersonal contact with caregivers they trust.

Thank you for supporting Pueblo Community Health Center.

Donald Moore, CEO
Pueblo Community Health Center

Giving to PCHC Changes Lives

For 37 years, PCHC has served the health care needs of the people of Pueblo and Huerfano Counties, regardless of a patient’s ability to pay. If you choose to contribute, it enables us to continue to offer expanded services that include primary medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy. If you want to help us perpetuate our mission, we invite you to make a contribution to Pueblo Community Health Center Foundation.

All funds raised will be allocated to our Foundation for the east side expansion, which breaks ground in October 2020. Any donation is appreciated and no gift is too small. Your support will make a difference in the lives of the people who trust their health needs to our providers.

If you would like to learn more about naming opportunities or planning for larger gifts, please contact Laura Kelly, Chief Development and Foundation Officer at (719) 543-8718 x 152 or email lkelly@pueblochc.org. Thank you for caring about those in need and investing in Pueblo’s east side. Gifts over $250 are eligible for EZ Tax credits.
Meet Dr. Riley

Years with PCHC: 23

What you do at PCHC: Physician

Where are you from: raised an Army Brat

Where did you go to school? College and medical school in Norfolk, Virginia

Hobbies/Interests: reading, watching sports, raising chickens

Favorite food/restaurant: I like all kinds of foods and restaurants

Favorite movie: too many

Favorite music/band: I listen to all kinds of music

Favorite place to vacation: Hawaii

Most surprising talent: handyman (woman)

Most rewarding aspect of your job: helping people

Have patients liked adopting virtual care?

- 86% said they are comfortable with phone visits
- 66% said they would be comfortable with video visits
- 98% of patients feel PCHC is meeting their needs through virtual care

Patient Comments Regarding Virtual Care

3rd Quarter 2020
Please consider donating to help Pueblo’s families in need of high quality, affordable health care.

Amount

- $25
- $50
- $100
- $200
- Other ____________

Please qualify my gift for the Colorado Enterprise Zone tax credit*
Last 4 digits of SSN/Colorado Acct Number ____________

- Check enclosed, payable to: PCHC Foundation • 110 E. Routt Ave. • Pueblo, CO 81004
- Charge my credit or debit card:

  Card Number

  Expires (mo/year)

  Card Billing Address

  Signature

  Name: ________________________________________________

  Mailing Address: ________________________________________

  City: _________________________________ State: _________ Zip: ____________

  Email: ____________________________________ Phone: ____________________

Thank you for your support!

*All sponsorships $250+ are eligible for a 25% Enterprise Zone tax credit.
To receive this CO tax credit, make your check payable to Pueblo Community Health Center Foundation and include your state tax ID or the last four digits of your social security number.

Have you remembered us in your will or trust? Please contact us to learn more (719) 543-8718 x152 or lkelly@pueblochc.org.

3rd Quarter 2020