How Virtual Care is Transforming Home Care

July 8, 2020

The healthcare system is fragmented into geographical, institutional, and therapeutic silos, which are often disconnected from each other. In this system, the transition of patient information from one isolated professional or clinic to the other is one of the biggest threats to optimal outcomes. Digital health tools offer a way to span the silos, making patient care more effective and efficient.

1. Virtual care shifts the balance of power.

It does this by connecting patients to information, advice and support while eliminating cost and travel time. Thus, it replaces the model of patient as passive recipient of care to one where they are actively engaged in their own care. (1)

Virtual care technologies can also improve the quality of care by connecting them to specialists outside of their region.

2. Virtual care acts as the facilitator between patients and caregivers.

Virtual care technologies can be leveraged across sites of care by connecting hospitals, physician offices, diagnostic centres, government services, and long-term care facilities through telehealth networks.

Patient portals have the power to coordinate patient care, improving both communication between patients and providers and the quality of care while reducing costs.

Virtual care allows for a team-based model of care where risk is minimized through task delegation, communication, shared accountability and contingency planning. (2)

3. Virtual care provides a central hub for tailored patient data.

Healthcare providers are developing their own online patient portals that give patients access to their own health information, either directly or via apps.

For example, Teleroo® World is an app designed to support distance coaching and collaboration between patients, caregivers, healthcare practitioners, and educators around the world. This collaborative software has given thousands of users access to a suite of tools, including videoconferencing, live coaching, document scanning, facial blurring, media upload/download, commenting, messaging, asynchronous video annotations, and a training library.

Over the last decade, virtual care has evolved well beyond its primary uses. In the past, virtual care has been used mainly for meetings and consultations, check-ins, and status

reports, it is now influencing new conditions like diabetes, and is being used for more in-depth treatments and monitoring of patients in home care.

Advantages for Home Care

Virtual care better enables healthcare specialists to monitor situations or procedures from remote locations.

Patient monitoring at home has been shown to be useful for treating patients with chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension. These types of patients are too often rehospitalized due to lack of communications or transparency about the patient's condition.

Digital health can support patient rehabilitation and post-operative recovery assessment, for example, after a stroke or a fall. Virtual care could include:
- Digital imaging and resources to inform rehabilitation tailored to home environments
- Video visits and internet-based therapeutic interventions for caregiver support, medication management, fall rehab, and dementia care
- Post-operative recovery assessment

Virtual care provides a powerful framework that informs, engages, and empowers home care patients in their recovery. The more a patient understands their overall plan of care, the better equipped they will be to self-advocate and get optimal outcomes.

Virtual care can help eliminate miscommunications and misunderstandings that lead to poor patient outcomes or rehospitalization.

Supporting Better Patient Outcomes with Insurance Protection for Healthcare Providers

Visit our website for more information on how MedThree's tailored insurance policies can meet the needs of your organization.

Content is current as of the date of broadcast and is subject to change without notice.

Sources:
1. https://www.longwoods.com/articles/images/deloitte-uk-connected-health.pdf
2. https://www.womenscollegehospital.ca/assets/pdf/wihv/WIHV_VirtualHealthSymposium.pdf