National Telehealth Conference

Track Two: Driving Innovation and Successful Implementation of Telehealth Across the Care Continuum

March 19-20, 2015
Aligning Telehealth Strategy and Streamlining Implementation

I. A New Perspective on Telehealth
II. Building for the Future: 10 Steps to Success
Telehealth – No Longer an “Innovation”

- Telehealth is becoming endemic → headlines, telehealth policy loosening, reimbursement improving
- Problems we have to solve (healthcare reform is going to punish low-performers)
- Payers are figuring it out too
- Patients are demanding a better experience and access
- Technology is advancing faster than ever

➢ Not an isolated, techy, “cool” solution to a specific problem
Telehealth Across the Continuum Requires a New Approach

**Acute Care**
- E-Emergency Services
- Virtual Sepsis Unit
- eICU

**Post-Acute Care**
- Telestroke
- Trauma Consults

**Community-Based Care**
- Virtual Specialist Consults

- Program in place at UC Health
- Potential virtual health opportunity

**Specialty Follow-Up Consults**

**Transplant Follow-Up**
- Inpatient Rehab
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Outpatient Rehab
- Home Care
- Home
- E-visits
- Wellness and Fitness Center
- Retail Pharmacy
- Physician Clinic
- Urgent Care Center
- Diagnostic/Imaging Center
- Ambulatory Procedure Center

**Hospital**
Build a System that Supports the Integration of Telehealth

- Difficult when “telehealth” is actually a generic term... What is it?
- Think “infrastructure” or “platform”... what will all telehealth initiatives require to be successful?
- How do you enable telehealth so that it supports your organization’s strategic direction and operational reality?

➢ Ten Steps to position your organization for the era of telehealth...
1. Determine **Who** is Going to Champion Telehealth

1. Does your organization have a *clear vision* for the role of telehealth?
   - The “call to action” must come from the top
2. Who is going to wake up thinking about this *every day*?
   
   **UC Health’s Telehealth Director** is responsible for leading telehealth program implementation.

3. Does the person in #2 have a telehealth “cabinet” of decision makers and representatives from key areas?
   - Are key end-users at the table (physicians, nurses, etc.)?
   - Is there unfailing commitment to moving forward?
2. Ensure Baseline Knowledge and Establish a Shared Definition

1. Do some preliminary research and enlist the help of experts (unless you have a resident guru)
2. Get everyone up to speed → orient and educate the “cabinet” so they share a common understanding
3. Establish what term you’ll use (eHealth, telehealth, virtual health, etc.), and agree upon your definition.

Our Telehealth Definition:
“Connected care services (including clinician-to-clinician, provider-to-patient, and consumer-oriented interactions) across a spectrum of electronically enabled consultative, direct patient care, educational and self-management services.”

UCHealth
UC Health Relied Upon Outside Expertise to Create Our Definition

- Telepharmacy
- Teleradiology
- Telepathology
- Virtual multidisciplinary conference
- Mobile self-tracking apps
- Social media
- Geo-tagged devices
- Patient web portal
- Online support groups

Virtual urgent care
- Virtual specialist consults (e.g., teledermatology, telepsychiatry)
- Virtual multidisciplinary conference
- Virtual medication management
- Telehealth kiosks

Clinician to Clinician
- eICU, e-ED
- Telestroke

Clinician to Patient
- Remote monitoring
- Personal activity monitors
- Telehealth kiosks
- Patient scheduling apps

Consumer Oriented
- Virtual medication management
- Personal activity monitors
- Quality and price transparency tools

© Image from BigStockPhoto.com

eICU = electronic intensive care unit; e-ED = electronic emergency department.
3. Align Your Telehealth Mission and Vision With That of the Organization

1. Identify telehealth’s “reason for being” in your organization

   Our Telehealth Mission:

   To improve the health of our local community and region and support our academic mission of research and education by leveraging telehealth/virtual health technology

3. What is your desired future state?

   Our Telehealth Vision:

   To become a national leader in the successful application of telehealth technology in the pursuit of UC Health’s tripartite mission
4. Build Telehealth Goals that Support the Organization’s Strategy

1. Leverage your “Cabinet” to build telehealth goals that support your organization’s strategic priorities

2. For these “top-down” telehealth goals, owners will need to be identified and buy-in is critical

3. Identify the strategic problem first, then design the telehealth solution to fit

UC Health’s Telehealth Strategy Committee is charged with the development of telehealth solutions to address system-level strategic imperatives.
5. Create a Platform for Program Development and Evaluation

1. Create a standard process for program development, so groups don’t have to re-invent the wheel every time

2. Build “tools” to assist teams developing new programs

UC Health’s Tools include:

- Telehealth Toolkit (guides all aspects of program design)
- Training-guide template

3. Create a process for program evaluation and prioritization, so your organization isn’t expending time and resources to develop low-priority programs.

UC Health’s Telehealth Strategy Committee is charged with evaluating and recommending telehealth programs for development.
6. Create an “Implementation Network” of Telehealth Experts to Operationalize

1. Program implementation requires the input of several different “specialists” (legal, IT, credentialing, intake & billing, etc.)

2. Build an internal “network” so these individuals can interface with one another and with new program teams to implement high-priority programs

UC Health’s Telehealth Implementation Committee meets regularly, and is charged with the operational implementation of high-priority telehealth projects.
Program Development and Prioritization Flowchart

1.a. New program concept initiated via strategic planning to address system priority

1.b. New program concept initiated by clinical team to address specific problem

1.5. a. Program team identified for design discussions

2. Telehealth Director interfaces with program team for design process and initial evaluation

3. Telehealth Director brings viable programs models to Chair of Telehealth Strategy Committee
4. Strategy Committee provides program recommendations based on:
   1) strategic fit/value and 2) ease of implementation

5. Telehealth Strategy Committee Chair brings selected programs for system-level approval

6. Telehealth Director begins formal implementation of approved programs

7. Telehealth Director brings select programs to Implementation Committee (as needed)
7. Develop a Systematic Approach to Address Reimbursement and Other Hurdles

- As telehealth policy and reimbursement changes continue at a rapid pace, it’s not enough to take a “wait and see” approach.
- Determine how to grow within the current climate, with an eye toward the changes that are coming in the next 1-2 years.
- Partner with payers, and your organization’s government relations and policy experts… incorporate them into your telehealth team.
- Bring your organization into the forums that are driving telehealth policy in your state, drive the changes that will improve care for your patients and increase efficiency.
- Launch “small change” pilots to test new approaches to reimbursement, and involve the right people.
System-Level and Local Teams Interact to Support Strategy and Operations

1. Telehealth Strategy Committee
   - Telehealth Director (plus Program Managers & IT)
   - IT
   - Reimbursement
   - Marketing
   - Credentialing
   - Legal
   - Medical Staff

2. Implementation Committee

3. Local Program Teams

Organizational Strategy & Integration
8. Build Your IT Platform With the “System” and the Future in Mind

- Remember that telehealth is technology-enabled, not technology-driven.

- Partner with your technology department, with strategic involvement of top leadership and on-the-ground involvement of operational staff.

- Establish necessary guidelines that encourage the growth and development of telehealth while not permitting the “Wild West”

- Determine what your “use cases” are currently, and how they may expand in the future.

- Carefully consider your technology needs: what to develop in-house and what to outsource
9. Drive Innovation Throughout Your Organization

- Identify your “innovators”, and involve them in the journey
- Broadly communicate the importance of telehealth technology and its future role in the delivery of patient care
- Eliminate the barriers that typically prevent the implementation of innovative solutions (legal, reimbursement, etc.)
- Expect some failures… reduce the risks to those willing to try new things. Maintain accountability, but ensure a non-punitive environment.
- Celebrate and reward the successes… make them visible
10. Bringing it all together! Creating the UC Health Telehealth Department

UC Health Telehealth Department was created to:

- Accelerate UC Health *strategic* and *performance* goals using telehealth technology
- *Reduce the variation* across telehealth programs, and the amount of time required to launch new programs
- *Bring innovative care delivery models* and novel telehealth solutions to UC Health for consideration
- Realize *ROI through the implementation and support* of telehealth programs across UC Health
10. Bringing it all together! Creating the UC Health Telehealth Department

UC Health Telehealth Department consists of:

- A small group of dedicated personnel who serve as integrators and activators
- An extended network of involved experts and support personnel that serve different roles
- A system or process for program development and barrier removal
- An approach to innovation that drives small changes to test future care delivery models