

# Rapid Deployment of a COVID-19 RPM Program

Expanding a Telehealth Program During a Pandemic Through  
Innovation, Logistics and Relationship Management

# Rapid Deployment of a COVID-19 RPM Program

Expanding a Telehealth Program During a Pandemic Through Innovation, Logistics and Relationship Management

## Executive Summary

Clear Arch Health and a national home health agency (HHA) have together been serving the home health care market with remote patient monitoring to care for patients with chronic conditions in the comfort of their own homes for two years. The two organizations – vendor and front-line provider – have worked together to deliver the best quality of care possible and have even had joint team meetings to strategize program expansion and future features that would be of value to clinicians and patients alike.

As COVID-19 descended upon us, every healthcare organization faced challenges of extending care with less in-person contact where possible. This client's RPM program was no different. The two organizations quickly huddled to strategize a new program to navigate the COVID-19 crisis together.

This whitepaper explores the teamwork, operations and quick response that resulted in the successful launch of a COVID-19 program in a matter of weeks for these home healthcare patients diagnosed or at risk of COVID-19.

## Joint Strategy Session

It makes sense to begin with the joint strategy session held between Clear Arch Health and the home healthcare organization. Meeting in person for several days in January of 2020, a team of clinicians, operations management, business development, marketing and executives from both organizations gathered to examine the RPM program and make plans for the future.

## COVID-19 Shifts the Plan

By late February focus was beginning to shift to the pandemic. By early March, the HHA requested a new program to be launched by April 1, 2020. This new program would focus on COVID-19 diagnosed patients who were at higher risk due to CHF or COPD. It would also prioritize patients with those chronic conditions who were suspected or at risk of COVID-19 infection.

After a joint planning session, it was decided the program would leverage the clinical expertise of the HHA and the technology innovation of Clear Arch Health to launch several new features to provide better oversight for the population of patients in the program.

In addition to expansion of the program features, another consideration was infection control. It was early in the pandemic and little was known about how long the virus would live on surfaces. Because the Clear Arch Health program delivers directly to the patient home and schedules pick up of used equipment at the end of the care period, disinfecting equipment to keep patients, clinicians, shipping agents and provisioning employees safe was a top priority.

Clear Arch Health contracted an expert to review the program logistics.

## Delivering Innovation in a Crisis

The new plan called for several features to connect patients and clinicians. One of those was a feature that was unique to the Clear Arch Health tablet-based RPM system – personal emergency response services (PERS). This integrated service would give patients the full telehealth platform but also deliver peace of mind that help would only be a button press away if patients experienced a medical emergency.

“ We worked closely with the Clear Arch Health operations team to ensure a smooth transition. Our clinicians were concerned about the care plans, patient screening, equipment disinfection, patient education and team training. Clear Arch Health listened intently to our needs and delivered a solid program in record time. ”

Director of Quality and Performance Improvement

The HHA's nurses were added to the responder list so that when a patient pressed the help button and spoke to the emergency operator, a nurse would be notified and could reach out to the patient. In extreme cases, emergency medical services could be dispatched to the patient's home.

While treating populations during a very trying time for home health agencies, it was important to limit the face-to-face visits while keeping a close watch on patients. COVID-19 patient screening was a valuable tool in this effort.

“It is really an innovation, relationship management, and logistics story,” said Jerriene Cordova, Senior Director of Telehealth Programs at Clear Arch Health. “Our teams had worked well together in the past. This rapid deployment leveraged that history together and we were able to focus on delivering the best program for patients in a matter of weeks. The virus was simply not going to wait for us, so we had to deliver quickly - we did it overnight,” continued Cordova.

## Operationalizing the Launch

The new program and features required new processes. “We worked closely with the Clear Arch Health operations team to ensure a smooth transition. Our clinicians were concerned about the care plans, patient screening, equipment disinfection, patient education and team training. Clear Arch Health listened intently to our needs and delivered a solid program in record time.” said Director of Quality and Performance Improvement.

Patient screening was important for early detection of COVID-19 symptoms, or worsening condition

in patients already diagnosed. Daily questions were created and added to the care plan. These questions are sent directly to the patient's RPM tablet and they can answer them simply by touching the screen. Answers that imply a patient may have the virus or is experiencing virus-like symptoms trigger an alert so that the HHA clinicians can follow up with the patient before the situation worsens. Early detection was critical.

Easy to understand printed materials to explain the program were created and added to every kit shipped to the patients. These materials explained everything from what to expect from their RPM program to how they or a family member could safely pack up the equipment for return at the end of the care period.

The patient education library was expanded to offer COVID-19 specific information to patients, including tips on prevention and how to care for yourself at home if diagnosed.

## Tracking Results

Clear Arch Health contracted the services of VersatileMed – now RS21 to track and report on patient engagement. One of the concerns with adding the PERS feature was that it would cause unnecessary ER utilization. But the team decided it was important for this population to receive help quickly because of the nature of the virus symptoms worsening rapidly.

“We had suspected that the Clear Arch Health patient questions delivered directly to the touch screen on their device would show a meaningful improvement over IVR engagement rates for patient response.

# Patient Engagement

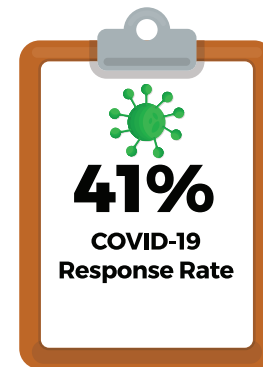
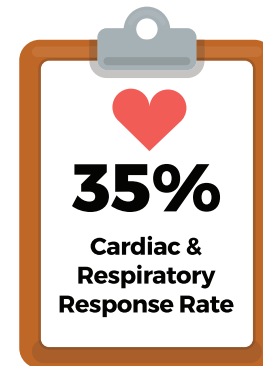
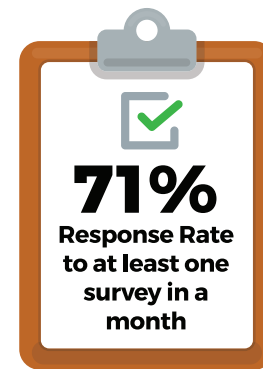
RS21 was able to analyze the program and show patients exhibited an over 70% monthly participation in health surveys," said Chris A. Otto, Senior Vice President at Clear Arch Health.

Stefany Goradia, VP of Health Analytics at RS21 noted, "Of the 170 patients enrolled in a 25-day period in February of 2021, 121 responded to at least one survey. That's a 71% response rate. Cardiac and respiratory patients received different surveys from COVID patients, who received more surveys – daily versus once every 3 days. The COVID patients had a higher response rate – responding to about 41% of their daily surveys while the cardiac and respiratory group who was surveyed 3 times a week, responded on average 35% of the time."

## Conclusion

"All in all, the experience in working as a team with Clear Arch Health has been a rewarding one. Our approach to include our program vendor in our strategy paid off when crisis struck. Because we already worked closely together, we were able to deliver a quality program to our patients in record time while keeping our staff safe," said the HHA's Director of Quality and Performance Improvement.

Now with vaccines being deployed at record pace, Clear Arch Health and the HHA are continuing on the path to a joint strategy to deliver solutions to a broader group of patient conditions. The roadmap has exciting innovation and continued improvements for patient care and streamlined operations, with or without a pandemic.



The Covid-19 were daily whereas cardiac and respiratory were 3x per week.

