

life care solutions

**Connected Care. Anytime, Anywhere.**

LifeStream Remote Health Management helps individuals stay healthy at home by enabling support, clinical oversight, communications and care coordination.



# LifeSpring Case Study

LifeSpring In-HomeCare Network has more than doubled their remote patient monitoring and has nearly 100% deployment of its telehealth units. Learn how telehealth became part of LifeSpring's culture and a marketing differentiator for the home care organization.

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## **Taking care of patients the way we ourselves would want to be taken care of is why LifeSpring In-HomeCare Network is successful, according to Darlene O'Hara, RN and Chief Clinical Officer.**

LifeSpring was launched in 2003 to provide home care health and personal services, based on the success of founder and CEO Karen Vahlberg's previous home care businesses.

LifeSpring focuses on helping people remain in their homes, near their families, for as long as patients choose to do so. The telehealth program, managed and improved by O'Hara, is how LifeSpring helps monitor and care for people that want to stay at home. Under O'Hara, patient monitoring has more than doubled, with near 100% deployment of telehealth units. In addition, LifeSpring has become a preferred provider of remote patient monitoring services to hospitals.

### **Assess and evolve the current telehealth program**

Though LifeSpring first implemented telehealth in 2007, the program was less than successful, said Vahlberg. In 2011, O'Hara took over and evaluated the telehealth program. LifeSpring had multiple types of remote patient monitoring units. The units were not fully utilized. There were formal processes for telehealth, but they weren't consistently utilized. O'Hara started by looking for the root causes and reasons why telehealth wasn't more consistently utilized at LifeSpring. Nothing escaped her scrutiny.

"I looked at our processes for identifying patients," said O'Hara. "I looked at our processes for who does what and who doesn't at LifeSpring. I started working with operations, admissions and clinical, as well as with our marketing department. I evaluated the quality of our units."

That is when the relationship between LifeSpring and Resideo Life Care Solutions really grew. "We began to switch over to the LifeStream remote health monitoring solution as our old units needed to be replaced," said O'Hara. However, it was more than technology that brought the two organizations together. "If we are to be successful with telehealth, we have to have a team and partner that is with us 24x7," added O'Hara.



"Our telehealth program didn't really take off until we incorporated Life Care Solutions into our processes. They helped make us the success that we are today."

"The one-on-one communication is probably the most valuable help we receive from Life Care Solutions," said O'Hara. "The customer service is beyond compare. Our LifeSpring team knows they can pick up the phone and call the Life Care Solutions clinical consultant anytime."

The people are outstanding and top-notch. We would call Life Care Solutions to talk about tweaking the program, and we developed the process for LifeSpring together. What we liked best about working with the people at Life Care Solutions is that they told us what they could do and then they did it."





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Chief Clinical Officer



**Darlene O'Hara, RN and Chief Clinical Officer, pictured here with Karen Vahlberg, CEO.**

### **Design the program for success**

At the start of the program, the clinical consultant helped LifeSpring identify patients that were the best fit for remote patient monitoring. Patients that had recent hospitalizations, falls or medication changes were prioritized. The consultant made sure the equipment was set up properly in LifeStream so that LifeSpring could manage and track their inventory within the LifeStream platform. The Resideo clinical consultant touches base with the LifeSpring staff on a regular basis to make sure everything is optimal.

There are several things that LifeSpring likes about the LifeStream remote health monitoring solution. "We like how the LifeStream remote health monitoring system integrates with our electronic medical records," said O'Hara. The EMR is HealthWyse. "The teachback questions in the LifeStream remote health monitoring solution are wonderful. We want to use the questions to help us educate patients and get any changes that we ask

of them to stick." Plus, Resideo provides supplemental call center and monitoring services to help with patients in the evenings and during the weekend, which minimized on-call and overtime pay for LifeSpring staff.

The reporting capabilities of the LifeStream remote health monitoring solution are important. "We use the data monthly," said O'Hara. "We share the results with leadership. We also share information from the reports with staff at quarterly meetings." The data is also used to recognize and congratulate offices that have improved their application of remote patient monitoring. Information is also shared with franchises to encourage them to incorporate remote patient monitoring and recognize their success.



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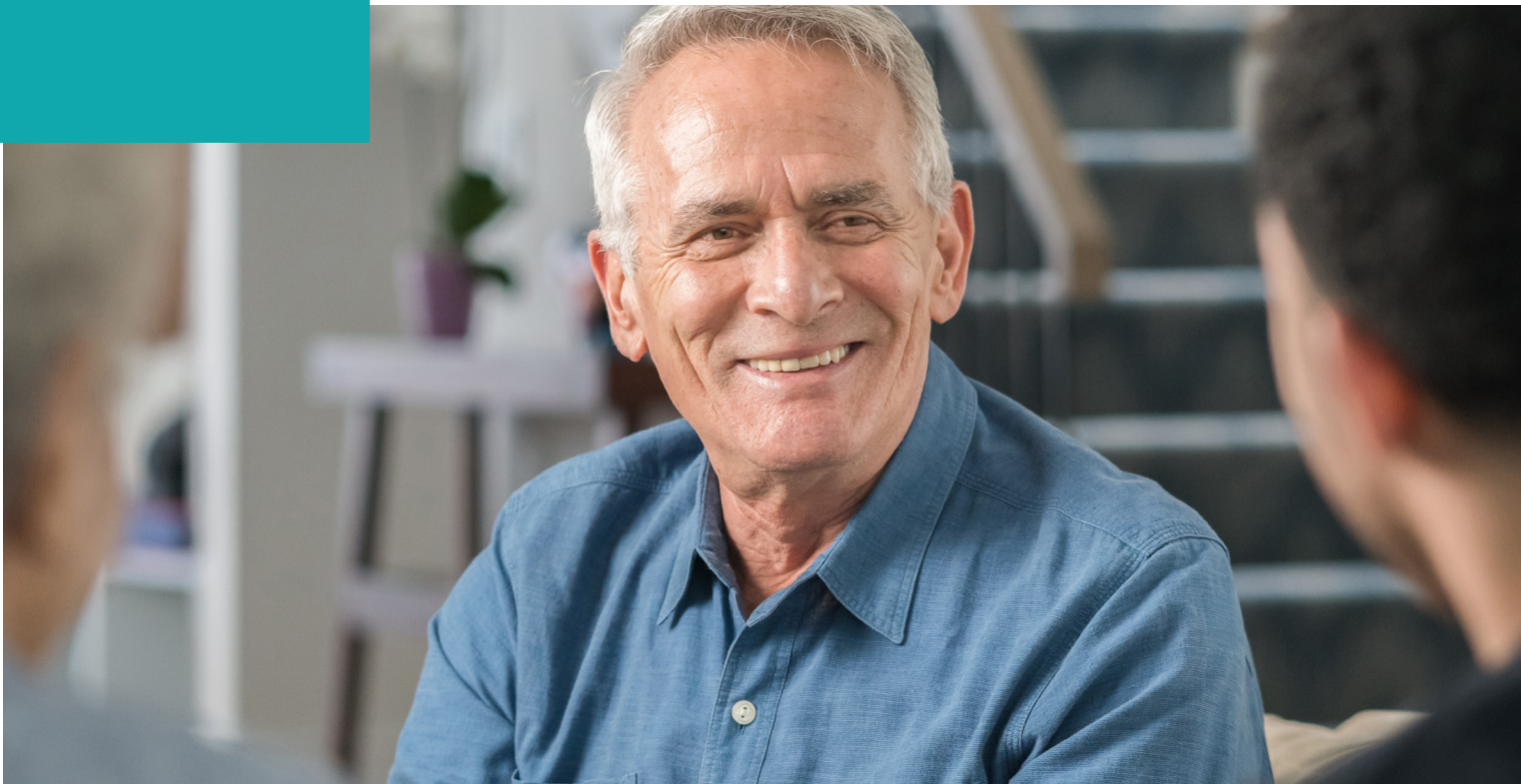
— Darlene O'Hara, RN,  
Chief Clinical Officer

### **Make remote care part of the culture**

Telehealth is part of the culture at LifeSpring. "We have a lot of nurses that come in and don't truly understand telehealth and what it means. We make telehealth part of their orientation," said O'Hara. "As we grow by purchasing agencies or adding franchises, we introduce Resideo and LifeStream remote health monitoring to the new groups and make telehealth a seamless process."

In addition, having remote patient monitoring capabilities is a differentiator for LifeSpring. "Having telehealth is a big marketing plus for us. We use it to obtain referrals," said O'Hara. "We are on the preferred provider list for hospitals because we offer telehealth and can show how we are reducing hospitalizations. We also have a waiting list of patients that want to go on monitoring. Patients like the personal care they receive and the ability to talk to someone. We want to increase our usage of monitoring by adding the video call capabilities of the LifeStream remote health monitoring solution."

"I am most proud of the fact that we at LifeSpring have made telehealth successful. We have a waiting list for patients that want to go into our telehealth program. I hope to continue growing our remote patient monitoring services," said O'Hara.





A successful telehealth program has several elements. Here's what worked for LifeSpring:



**Start slow.**

Determine what you want to do and accomplish. Identify the challenges and determine the most important things to work on first. Don't try to do everything at once.



**Create a plan.**

Understand who does what and consider all the details. Think about how you will deploy remote patient monitoring units, how you will monitor patients, and who will monitor the patients. LifeSpring found what worked best for them was to dedicate nurses to monitoring patients.



**Obtain support from nurses.**

Nurse buy-in is a key to success for remote patient monitoring programs. LifeSpring found it worked best for them to use people other than the nurses to deliver the units to patients' homes and take care of the set up. LifeSpring also has assigned a point person in each location to be available to talk to the patient, doctor and the field staff, and coordinate among them.



**Determine patient appropriateness.**

Not every patient is willing to take responsibility for their health. LifeSpring found that the patients that are the best fit for remote monitoring are those that are willing to take control and do something about their condition.



**Share the data**

Using the data builds support throughout the organization and improves utilization. LifeSpring compares the readmission rates of those in a remote patient monitoring program versus those that aren't. LifeSpring reports this information to its referral sources, preferred hospitals and leadership group.


## LifeStream Remote Health Monitoring Capabilities Used

- Clinical consulting
- 24x7 live customer support
- Clinical call center and monitoring services
- LifeStream clinical software
- Genesis Touch patient tablet and kit







A photograph of a person lying in a hospital bed, partially covered by a teal-colored overlay. The overlay contains a quote in white text. The background shows a hospital bed with white linens and a person's legs in blue jeans.

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### **About LifeSpring In-HomeCare Network**

LifeSpring was founded in 2003 and expanded over the next decade to include hospice care, home health care, private duty, medical staffing, palliative care, telehealth and franchising. The LifeSpring mission is to provide exceptional, compassionate care to help people live and age in the place they most choose—their own home.

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