CASE STUDY

UNC Lenoir's Natural Adoption of Telemedicine Produces Happier, Healthier Employees

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UNC Lenoir Health Care quickly put a telemedicine program in place for their co-workers after receiving a direct referral from an employee who had tried the service herself. Implemented in February 2016, UNC Lenoir and its employees have been reaping the benefits for over three years.

BY PARTNERING WITH RELYMD, UNC LENOIR HEALTH CARE IS:

- Improving work attendance & increasing the productivity of employees
- Keeping their workforce satisfied with programs that actually save money
- Reducing health care costs for UNC Lenoir's health plan and their employees

About UNC Lenoir Health Care

UNC Lenoir Health Care is a 261-bed not-for-profit hospital located in the heart of Lenoir County, North Carolina. The hospital has over 100 physicians on staff, nearly 1,000 additional staff members in various roles, and recently entered an agreement with UNC Health Care, a flagship healthcare leader in the state of North Carolina.

The Call for Telemedicine

UNC Lenoir Health Care's leadership team decided to launch a telemedicine program for their co-workers after one of their long-time employees, Constance Hengel, RN, BSN, Director of Community Programming and Development, experienced RelyMD first-hand when her husband was suffering from bronchitis on a Saturday evening. "Instead of traveling to an urgent care facility, my husband had heard of RelyMD and decided to try it out. He was diagnosed and had a prescription waiting for him in less than 20 minutes," explains Hengel. "It was such a great experience- I knew I had to share it with my colleagues," she explained.

Director of Human Resources, Jimmy Person, had been exploring telemedicine but hadn't made the jump into offering the service until he was introduced to RelyMD. The initial idea was to bring an easy to access service to employees that would help make their lives easier but upon fully exploring the service, Person realized that there were added benefits for Lenoir.

"Not only were we looking to make our employees happy by offering them a great service, we also saw an incredible opportunity to help them save money while lowering our health insurance costs as an employer," said Person.

To make this successful, Lenoir needed a direct-to-consumer telemedicine provider who had the ability to see patients via mobile phone, web browser, or phone call, was accessible from work computers, and had the ability to capture both employees and their dependents while being able to distinguish them from the general public in order to provide them with an agreed upon discounted rate that was subsidized by UNC Lenoir.

Advantages of RelyMD

By selecting RelyMD as their telemedicine service, UNC Lenoir Health Care was able to give employees and their dependents 24/7/365 access to RelyMD providers with no out-of-pocket cost to the employee.

All RelyMD providers are actively practicing, highly-trained, virtual care specialists based in North Carolina's Triangle region. Person noted that having his team interact with these highly trained providers who were located in their home state made him feel more comfortable knowing they were familiar with the local population they would be treating.

RelyMD also works with hospital systems to help their employees establish a medical home with a primary care provider and can help guide patients to the most cost-effective place of service within their provider network.

Easy to See Success

Since implementing RelyMD more than three years ago, the service has already paid for itself.

By accessing RelyMD at the time and place of their choosing, UNC Lenoir Health Care co-workers have saved countless hours that would otherwise have been spent in the waiting room. Employees no longer need to take time off of work to see a doctor for a minor ailment. 90% of UNC Lenoir's employees who have used RelyMD said that the service helped them get back to work faster, translating directly into decreased absenteeism and increased employee productivity.

"Our employees' reception of RelyMD has been overwhelmingly positive. They're no longer spending their free time in the urgent care or emergency department and they're saving money by having 24/7/365 access to healthcare. The fact that they're truly able to see a provider in less than 10 minutes really makes our employees trust the service," said Person.

"RelyMD providers are caring and considerate and have proven that by making follow-up calls to ensure patients have everything they need, it really solidifies the experience," he added.

In the 3 years since UNC Lenoir rolled out the new service, RelyMD has helped nearly 400 employees avoid a trip to the urgent care or emergency department with an estimated cost savings of $169,000 for the organization.

$200

Average Cost Per Urgent Care Visit

×

275

Urgent Care Visits UNC Lenoir Employees Avoided

$1,200

Average Cost Per ED Visit

×

95

ED Visits UNC Lenoir Employees Avoided

Lenoir's estimated cost savings from Urgent Care Avoidances

$55,000

+

Lenoir's estimated cost savings from ED Avoidances

$114,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED SAVINGS OVER 3 YEARS:

$169,000

Achieving Continued Success

Lenoir plans on continuing to focus on employee engagement to encourage appropriate use of RelyMD's services. UNC Lenoir has achieved a 28% annualized utilization rate of their telemedicine service since launch. This is remarkable when compared to several telemedicine providers who report average utilization rates of just 5%.

Through employee education and simple reminders shared via internal marketing campaigns, Lenoir hopes to increase the number of employees using the service. They are also focusing within their employee health department and putting steps in place to ensure that RelyMD is top of mind for employees who begin to show signs of illness. By providing private rooms where employees can access the service on-site, Lenoir is hoping to see an increase in usage by promoting the service as something that is always accessible, even while working.

By implementing telemedicine as a service available for its employees, UNC Lenoir Health Care continues to prove itself to be an innovative hospital that gives its employees access to top-notch services.

About RelyMD

RelyMD is a direct-to-consumer telemedicine service. RelyMD was founded by 95 Raleigh-based emergency medicine physicians- our goal is to provide patients with a quick, convenient, an affordable way to access high-quality medical care. We believe that in doing so, we can create efficiencies that save money for your organization and its employees.

If you would like to learn how you can easily provide RelyMD to your employees, please email sales@relymd.com.