

CASE STUDY:

Caring for Clinically Complex Patients Close to Home

CHRISTUS Mother Frances Hospital – Sulphur Springs brings together multiple telemedicine service lines to provide dialysis for seriously ill patient

Overview

A patient experiencing acute respiratory failure sought care in the emergency department of his local rural hospital, CHRISTUS Mother Frances Hospital – Sulphur Springs, located in Northeast Texas. The cause of the respiratory failure was fluid overload. Typically, a patient in such an emergent state would require immediate transfer to a larger facility in Tyler or Dallas – as many as 90 miles away.

With its telemedicine partnership with Access TeleCare, CHRISTUS Mother Frances Hospital – Sulphur Springs admitted and successfully treated this patient locally, including providing dialysis. Through the collaboration of on-site specialty physicians, the ED physician, hospitalist, on-site nurses, telemedicine nephrologist, telemedicine pulmonary and critical care specialist, this patient was admitted to the hospital for dialysis and associated treatment.

THE RESULT: The patient avoided both transfer to an urban hospital and significant time spent on a BiPAP machine.



“The power of collaborative telemedicine brought care to the patient much more quickly than if he had to be transferred and avoided potential additional adverse outcomes.”



Lauren Ingram
MSN, MS, APRN, FNP-C

National Director of
Advanced Practice
Providers, Access TeleCare

CHRISTUS Mother Frances Hospital - Sulphur Springs' Telemedicine Partnership

CHRISTUS Mother Frances is a 96-bed hospital in rural Sulphur Springs, Texas, approximately 90 miles from Dallas.

CHRISTUS Mother Frances Hospital – Sulphur Springs launched 24/7 telePulmonary and critical care in 2013 and since added other telemedicine service lines, including teleNephrology, to expand its ability to care for clinically complex patients in their own community.

When the hospital launched teleNephrology in 2020, it anticipated that certain renal patients still would require immediate transfer to other facilities that could provide a higher level of care. Patients with electrolyte imbalances, fluid overload, and current dialysis needs would have to be transferred. As comfort with the teleNephrology service grew among local providers, the facility decided to pursue the capability to perform dialysis. In May of 2022, they performed dialysis on their first patient.

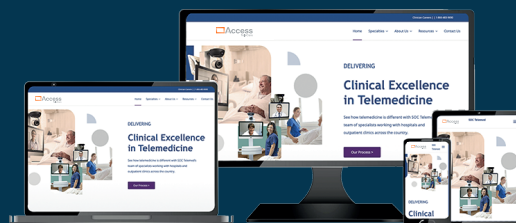
"The collaborative telemedicine relationship fosters on-site nurses' confidence in and comfort providing high-acuity care, including dialysis," said

Ingram. "We have nurses performing at the top of their license, and our patients reap the benefits because the local hospital is capable of meeting their complex needs."

With the telemedicine programs, the hospital is retaining more complex patients, including those with COVID-19 needing ICU care, and its on-site nurses and other clinicians are performing at the top of their licenses to deliver clinical excellence.

The hospital is part of the CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances Health System, which includes hospitals, a long-term acute care facility, and multi-specialty medical group practice serving Northeast Texas and Louisiana.

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