

CASE STUDY:

Augmenting Local Nephrology Coverage with Telemedicine Results in Retention of Higher Acuity Patients



teleNephrology Program Results

Challenge

Two hospitals that are part of the same health system were faced with the imminent retirement of their single on-site nephrologist who covered both locations. They needed a more sustainable model for the future that also allowed them to transition the existing provider into retirement seamlessly.

Solution

Access TeleCare was engaged in 2023 to provide comprehensive nephrology coverage and ensure long-term stability of the nephrology service. Access TeleCare deployed a pod of nephrologists to provide inpatient coverage via telemedicine three weeks out of each month with the local nephrologist continuing to work one week per month. **The results were increased retention of more complex, high-acuity patients, reduced length of stay and readmissions, and stabilized Medicare revenue.**

Access TeleCare's teleNephrologists fully integrated with local hospital physicians and staff and local dialysis centers to co-manage inpatient care for all nephrology patients from admission through discharge to outpatient care and management.

Keys to Program Success

As with all its telemedicine programs, Access TeleCare fully integrates with the hospitals' on-site teams, following their internal processes and procedures and working in their EMR. Having a dedicated pod of board-certified teleNephrologists for each hospital also ensures professional relationship building and seamless communication and collaboration among care teams.



36% reduction in length of stay



18% reduction in readmissions



24% increase in retention of patients with the highest complexity diagnoses



Stabilized revenue for nephrology DRGs

"With rates of chronic kidney disease rising in the U.S., along with an increased incidence of diabetes and other factors associated with risk of developing kidney disease, it's imperative that hospitals have consistent nephrology coverage to meet care needs. With telemedicine, hospitals can circumvent the national shortage of nephrologists, having almost immediate access to specialty knowledge and expertise without transferring patients elsewhere."

Dr. Saurin Patel

Chief of Hospitalist Medicine and Emerging Service Lines

