

## CASE STUDY:

# UnityPoint Health Transforms Specialty Care with Multiple Telemedicine Programs



## Challenge

As a regional health system serving communities throughout Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin, UnityPoint Health's team relied heavily on *locums* providers. Plagued by challenges to recruit in-person providers to its rural markets, UnityPoint Health faced significant financial pressure and needed coverage for specialty neurology and behavioral health care to service patient demand across its network of 20 regional hospitals, 19 community network hospitals, and over 400 clinics.

## Solution

UnityPoint Health partnered with Access TeleCare to launch teleNeurology services including teleStroke, teleNeurohospitalist, and Remote EEG interpretations, as well as virtual behavioral health services for Emergency Department consults and consultation-liaison psychiatry services in their ICU and med-surg units. The partnership started in 2017 with three hospitals. Currently, the partnership has expanded to eight hospitals across two markets. Access TeleCare's telemedicine programs gave the health system the flexibility to meet the needs of its rural and urban hospitals, and Access TeleCare's fully-integrated specialists and easy-to-use technology allowed for seamless implementation of **multiple specialty programs**.

### TeleNeurology solutions include:

- ✓ Acute stroke care
- ✓ 24/7 remote EEG readings
- ✓ Emergent neurology coverage
- ✓ Inpatient neurohospitalist care

### Behavioral health solutions include:

- ✓ Psychiatric consults in the ED
- ✓ Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry in the ICU and Medical Surgical Units.

## Telemedicine Program Results

### Increasing Neurology Revenue

**300%** revenue increase after implementing teleStroke program

**130%** additional revenue increase after adding inpatient teleNeurohospitalist service

### Achieving ROI with Behavioral Health Telemedicine

**\$1.7 MILLION** avoided in annualized boarding costs

**281%** ROI achieved after implementing virtual behavioral health



**11.8-hour decrease in average length of stay** for behavioral health patients



## Keys to Program Success

**Together, Access TeleCare's programs produced tremendous financial, operational, and patient experience improvements for UnityPoint Health.**

Quick response times, high levels of engagement with on-site providers, and fully integrated telemedicine specialists delivered sustainable solutions for UnityPoint Health's most pressing clinical priorities, such as rapid acute stroke identification. "We're flying through stroke surveys now," Dr. Cate Ranheim, UnityPoint Health's interim chief medical officer noted.

Patients now have timely access to the specialty care they need, and the health system's on-site care teams are better equipped and supported to provide optimal health outcomes without increasing burnout. The system also achieved significant financial benefits including a more than 300 percent increase in neurology revenue, a 61 percent improvement in behavioral health response times, and an ROI of 281 percent through reduced ED boarding costs.

**"By bringing in Access TeleCare's behavioral health providers, we've been able to reduce wait times, reduce boarding, get patients that are suicidal out of 1-to-1 monitoring more quickly, and [provide a] better patient experience because of faster response times – our providers and patients are happier."**

**Dr. Cate Ranheim**

UnityPoint Health interim chief medical officer

