

CASE STUDY:

CaroMont Regional Medical Center Improves Outcomes and Metrics with Virtual Behavioral Health



Behavioral Health Program Results

About Customer

CaroMont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia, NC is a 476-bed acute care hospital serving a county population of 300,000 and millions more in the Charlotte metropolitan area.

Challenges

At CaroMont Regional Medical Center, the behavioral health resources of the Emergency Department were stretched thin. When patients arrived at the ED presenting with behavioral health needs, the hospital was taking too long to process behavioral health consultations – causing long wait times and a strain on resources.

Many patients, if assessed promptly and appropriately, can move out of the ED and into inpatient behavioral health care or return home with outpatient care instructions. At CaroMont, the increased volume of behavioral health patients diverted resources away from other emergency patients, triggering an overflow of more than 1,700 “Code Purple” (ED Ambulance Diversion) hours in the ED.

Solution

CaroMont partnered with Access TeleCare to provide consistent, high-quality behavioral health coverage in the ED via telemedicine. Like many hospitals across the country, CaroMont’s ED was crowded. Patients with behavioral health issues faced extended wait times and understaffed psychiatric resources, often leading to needless transfers and fewer beds available for medical emergencies. By launching virtual behavioral health with Access TeleCare, CaroMont reduced length of stay for psychiatric patients by 70% in the Emergency Department and increased the medically-appropriate discharge rate to 65%. Improved access and timeliness of psychiatric care in the ED not only had a positive effect on psychiatric patients, it increased bed availability for all patients. As a result, CaroMont reduced its annual “Code Purple” (ED Ambulance Diversion) hours from 1,700+ to just 148.

The positive impact of adding virtual behavioral health didn’t stop in the ED. Because behavioral health patients received faster consultations, and the quality of care for these patients improved, CaroMont improved the mix of patients in its inpatient behavioral health unit. By reducing transfer rates to just nine percent, patients now receive the care they need, closer to home.



70% reduction in length of stay for BH patients



Reduced “Code Purple” hours (ED Ambulance Diversion) from 1,700+ to just 148



Reduced transfer rates to just 9%



Increased timely access and reduced ED Boarding