

Using Remote Patient Monitoring to Improve Long-Term Independent Living

“Working in tandem with Immanuel Communities to use telehealth as the lynchpin for a program focused on long-term health and wellness has allowed us to provide proactive care for residents who want to understand their own health better, and attain the knowledge necessary to embrace long-term health and well-being.”

– *Bridget Caniglia,*
Vice President of Home Care

Case Study





The Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) utilizes Honeywell’s remote patient monitoring devices in conjunction with its LifeStream healthcare provider software to provide a complete telehealth solution for patients. In 2009 it partnered with Pacific Springs Village – an Immanuel independent living community – to launch a new wellness program called VNA Community Care.

The overall result of the new program? Better informed residents, who report feeling more in control of their health and life.

The Need

According to an article in Health Affairs magazine, “Many studies have shown that patients who are “activated”-that is, have the skills, ability, and willingness to manage their own health and health care—experience better health outcomes at lower costs compared to less activated patients. In an effort to quantify levels of patient engagement, Judith Hibbard of the University of Oregon developed a “patient activation measure” — a validated survey that scores the degree to which someone sees himself or herself as a manager of his or her health and care.

In an analysis of more than 30,000 patients, Hibbard and coauthors found that those with the lowest activation scores, that is, people with the least skills and confidence to actively engage in their own health care, incurred costs that averaged 8 to 21 percent higher than patients with the highest activation levels, even after adjusting for health status and other factors. And patient activation scores were shown to be significant predictors of health care costs.”

A resident of the Immanuel Pacific Springs Village community, Elias* was 80 years old when he first experienced a fall, due to light-headedness when he moved from a sitting to a standing position. It wasn’t a critical event from the standpoint of injury, but it did give him pause.

He decided he wanted to try to avoid any reoccurrences, and so went to meet with the healthcare provider on staff at the Wellness Center at Pacific Springs Village. She told him about a new proactive program they were offering called VNA Community Care.

The Key to Community Care

The new program’s central remote monitoring kiosk inside the Wellness Center provides Elias with a way to check his vital signs on a regular basis, with a VNA telehealth nurse tracking and monitoring his reported trends. After his first two vitals checks, the telehealth nurse noticed his sitting vs. standing blood pressure was markedly different.

This contrast in blood pressure levels was concerning enough that she followed up with Elias’ primary care physician, who then modified his blood pressure medications. The change in his medications was exactly what Elias needed and rectified his problems with dizziness.

Though the initial issue was addressed, Elias still has his vitals checked every week, to ensure his blood pressure levels maintain consistency, and he’s started tracking other vitals as well.

Striving for Long-term Healthy Living

According to the VNA telehealth nurses and the staff at Immanuel Communities, the residents at Pacific Springs Village have fully embraced the new program, with its goals for long-term wellness that include:



VNAs — a critical resource in providing home care and health services.

More About

The Visiting Nurse Association was created in 1896. With each passing decade, VNA became a critical resource in providing home care and health services to the communities it grew to serve. Today, VNA of Omaha and Council Bluffs remains the recognized and respected leading in-home care provider at the forefront of innovative skilled health services and compassionate caregiving.

Immanuel Communities tailors its services to the personal needs and wants of its residents. As Nebraska's longtime leader in senior housing and services, Immanuel Communities is committed to a personalized approach to lifestyle, continuous wellness, improvement and innovation.

- Education around vital signs and what they mean;
- The ability to self-recognize issues that may arise based on changes in vital signs; and
- The ability to communicate with their healthcare providers and physicians about the state of their health.

In order to reach those goals, VNA Community Care took an alternative approach to remote patient monitoring – which VNA would typically utilize in a post-discharge hospital situation – and instead used the monitoring devices to give residents the opportunity to track their vital signs on a long-term basis, and look to identify trends using Honeywell's LifeStream software.

“We designed the program to empower our resident population with the ability to proactively embrace wellness, by giving them the tools to be in control of their own health,” said Deb Welk, Vice President of Health Care Services at Immanuel. “The feedback we’ve received from our residents has been so positive we are implementing the same program in our other communities as well.”

Successful Patient Engagement

Immanuel Communities credits the program's high success rates among its residents to two things: 1) the regular access to VNA's telehealth nurses who act as “go-to” coaches for the residents and 2) being able to see and track their own vital sign data.

The combination of those two components has allowed many of their residents to address health issues before they became emergencies, and keep their healthcare costs down by circumventing trips to the hospital or emergency room. For example, residents with coronary heart disease (CHD) have been able to mitigate the effects of their disease by monitoring their blood pressure and weight, which in turn incentivizes them to maintain a healthier weight through diet and exercise modifications.

“The kind of preventative program we’ve put into place at Immanuel Communities has given our residents the ability to confidently navigate their own healthcare world,” said Ms. Welk.

*Patient name is representative of a population of people.



For more information

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