

ELIMINATING BARRIERS IN PROVIDING CARE

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BACKGROUND

- In Ontario, there are many reasons that make it difficult for individuals to get the care that they need. Some frequent reasons include: individuals may not be attached to a family doctor, the location where they live may not have any physicians accessible, a demanding job limits opportunity for access, and even family obligations that do not allow for the time to seek care.
- As we have seen with the COVID-19 pandemic, there will also be instances where a patient cannot be physically at their doctor's office to be seen due to being infected that requires isolation.
- People who have mobility issues may no longer be capable of visiting their doctor's office with the same ease, and therefore might not be able to get the care that they need in a timely manner.



OUR TEAMS ROLE

- During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we introduced the virtual first model to help bring the COVID-19 related cases down while still providing care and accessible to our patients.
- Providing virtual care has played a key role in ensuring that our patients still get the health care they need without them leaving their home.
- The phone and video consultation is not only available to our physicians but also to our Interprofessional Healthcare Providers and Residents.
- We are proud to say that our Home visit program has been one of our most community-focused programs serving mainly to the most vulnerable among our patients.
- We have administered both routine and urgent care along with COVID-19 vaccine through home visits



CHALLENGES

- Some express concerns about the quality of care that they will receive if they will only be seen through a call or video by their care provider.
- Some may not be comfortable with the use of technology or may find it difficult to navigate, others may not have full access to the internet, computer/tablet or a phone.
- Some health concerns require a physical examination and cannot properly addressed over the phone or video.
- Our Home visit program usually only runs during regular clinic hours.
- The current capacity of our Home visit program is to only provide service within a particular catchment area and is limited in number due to the number of available providers.

DATA

- In 2021, 43% of our patients encounters was done virtually.
- Our team have conducted around 550 home visits to our patients for the year 2021-2022.
- In the year 2021, we have worked collaboratively with our partners and have administered 620 COVID-19 vaccine through home visit services.
- As of Q1 2022-2023, our Home visit team have provided 100 patient encounters.
- Among our Interprofessional Healthcare Providers (IHP), the Social Workers and Registered Dietitians have the most number of virtual encounters with patients. For Q1, 80% of patients seen by our Social Workers were done virtually and 91% for our Registered Dietitians.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Virtual Primary Care is here to stay.
- Health care providers become more accessible through the use of different virtual platforms.
- Patients have been able to adapt to receiving care through various virtual platforms and are more comfortable seeing their physician in this manner.
- Asking for feedback from both providers and patients has helped to improve the workflow on how we provide care.
- Providing clear instructions prior to the virtual session helps to bring ease to the patient.
- Working closely with our community partners to effectively provide care not only to our patients, but also to other members of the community improves service and partnerships.

I would like to thank all the members of our team in continuously working together to provide the support our patients and the community needs.