



CASE STUDY: ANTHONY MEDICAL CENTER

Helping Rural Patients Receive Continuing Care in Their Communities

Eagle Telemedicine service features Kansas doctors working to provide better healthcare for our Kansas neighbors.



THE CHALLENGE

The state of Kansas is home to 83 Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), a CMS designation that acknowledges the importance of smaller, rural facilities by providing relief from the financial pressures of fixed Medicare reimbursement rates. These hospitals face additional challenges in providing patient access to specialty providers not typically found at smaller facilities.

That challenge extends to hospitalist medicine, the fast-growing specialty that provides inpatient primary care to a hospitalized patient from admission through discharge. For 25-bed **Anthony Medical Center** (AMC) in Anthony, Kansas, population 2,254, the need for hospitalist coverage is met through the Eagle Telemedicine service.

THE SOLUTION

Created specifically for in-patient settings, Eagle Telemedicine leverages nursing staff within a hospital for hands-on attention as an Eagle TeleHospitalist working off-site delivers clinical decision-making, directing a robotic camera and interacting with nurse and patient via two-way audio-video. Patients get the expert care they need, when they need it, and smaller hospitals gain access to physician resources they cannot effectively recruit or fund full-time.

“The skilled providers at Anthony Medical Center do an excellent job of meeting the bulk of their patients’ healthcare needs, yet sometimes need immediate assistance,” said Eagle tele-hospitalist Brian Hunt, MD. “With the Eagle Telehospitalist system, I can be ‘beamed into’ a patient room within minutes. In addition to providing staffing flexibility, we’ve helped patients who would otherwise require transport receive the specialist attention they need while remaining in the community they call home.”

THE RESULTS

To Dr. Hunt and his TeleHospitalist colleagues Dr. Jason Kimball and Dr. Marc Scarbrough, solutions such as Eagle Telemedicine’s are a key piece in the advancement of healthcare through information technology. “In addition to our team being able to examine a patient within minutes, we can also review that patient’s chart through online electronic health record exchange. And because of statewide health information exchanges (HIEs), we’re able to further share that patient information securely with other providers throughout Kansas involved in a patient’s care. Telemedicine is an essential ingredient in all of this, adding real-time, patient-physician interaction to immediate information exchange.”

AMC patient reception of telemedicine has been enthusiastic—especially when it prevents the transport of a patient to a metro-area facility. “The staff at AMC are these patients’ and their families’ neighbors and friends,” said Dr. Hunt. “Anything that helps these patients remain near their homes while enjoying the benefits of modern healthcare technology is important to their overall wellbeing.”

KEY BENEFITS & OUTCOMES

- ✓ Provides skilled hospitalist care in rural facilities without requiring full-time hiring
- ✓ Helps avoid the need for patient transport by “beaming in” as-needed skillsets
- ✓ Supports rural hospitals participating in the CMS Critical Access Hospital

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BRIAN HUNT, MD
HOSPITALIST

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678.441.8529

info@EagleHospitalPhysicians.com



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