

Nash UNC Health Care: Telemedicine Adds Physician Resources and Supports Patient Retention

The Need: Scaling Services and Alleviating Burnout

Nash UNC Health Care, a 280-bed, acute care facility in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, serves a community of more than 60,000 residents in the eastern part of the state. The hospital was named one of the nation's top hospitals by the Leapfrog Group, for its commitment to the highest standards of patient safety and quality of care. In continuing this high standard of service, the hospital was facing several operational stressors: physician shortages and burnout; revenue loss due to patient transfers, and insufficient 24x7 coverage in a few key specialties.

Looking ahead, the hospital needed to retain more patients by eliminating coverage gaps and providing round-the-clock care, so patients did not need to seek care elsewhere. Staff work-life balance was another concern to prevent burnout.

The Challenge: Launching Telemedicine Services

Nash UNC Health Care was seeing neurology patients being sent to higher levels of care due to insufficient specialty coverage. Further, infectious disease patients were also experiencing longer lengths of stay due to limited physician resources.

Compounding the problem was the decision by two older neurologists serving the community to scale back their workload and focus on their private practice. They tried to recruit replacements for the hospital and were unsuccessful. "We were left without neurology services literally overnight," said Davis Greene, Vice President of Operations at Nash UNC Health Care.

It was a similar story with the sole infectious disease specialist who needed additional help to share the patient care workload.

Davis Greene and his team decided it was time to look at telemedicine to solve the recruitment, physician retention and specialty care challenges. The team conducted an extensive national search and chose Eagle Telemedicine. "We were pleased Eagle could tap right into the systems we already use," said Greene. "The physicians don't have to change anything they normally do," he added.



Reduced patient transfers down to three or less each month



TeleNeurology created additional revenue, allowing the hospital to recover more costs



Prevented physician burnout in other specialties like infectious disease

The Solution: Eagle Telemedicine Solves Specialty Staffing Shortage

Nash UNC Health Care's first action was to employ Eagle's TeleNeurology services. "We had been losing patients to UNC Chapel Hill, from eight to nine a month. Our patients wanted to stay near home. With Eagle, we fulfilled this need and reduced patient transfers down to three or less each month," said Greene. Response time is another plus. Patients can now have a neurology consult in an hour. "It's much quicker than what we had experienced, waiting for doctors to leave their clinics and travel to us," Greene said.

The TeleNeurology service went so well UNC Nash decided to add TeleID (Infectious Disease) to cover nights and weekends. It enables the one hospital specialist "to have part of her life back," said Greene. "She is very grateful for Eagle Telemedicine and can relax on weekends now."

"Eagle's extensive national network of specialists will allow us to scale more services. Working with Eagle specialists has already enabled us to cover our costs by retaining more patients."

- **Davis Greene, Vice President of Operations,
Nash UNC Health Care**

Day-to-day telemedicine operations are going smoothly, Greene said. Designated clinical leads can get answers quickly from Eagle Telemedicine and identify more specialties and subspecialties. For example, Nash UNC Health Care was pleased to discover Eagle Telemedicine can remotely read an EEG.

The integration of Eagle Telemedicine has been well received by physicians who support continued use of the services. A yearly strategy survey showed very positive response from the physician respondents, said Greene.

Using Eagle Telemedicine has helped Nash UNC Health Care continue its neurology specialty services and prevent physician burnout in other specialties like infectious disease. It has added revenue, balanced out costs for the hospital, and established a solid foundation for scaling new telemedicine services.

Learn how we can help you expand specialty care services, retain more patients, and increase revenue.

Contact Eagle today.

Nash UNC Health Care

Located in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Nash UNC Health Care is a nonprofit hospital affiliate of UNC Health Care, offering access to a wide range of locally available care and services including a total of 345 beds at four licensed hospitals: Nash General, its 280-bed, flagship acute care facility; Nash Day Hospital providing outpatient treatments and surgeries; Coastal Plain Hospital, offering mental health inpatient and outpatient services, and Bryant T. Aldridge Rehabilitation inpatient center. With Eagle Telemedicine, Nash UNC Health Care is providing more specialty coverage and helping to alleviate staff burnout.

Use Case

Expand specialty care coverage, increase patient retention rates, and add revenue.

Eagle Telemedicine Benefits

- Ability to continue offering Neurology services and decrease patient transfers
- Less physician burnout by sharing patient workloads
- Expanded night and weekend specialty coverage
- Cost recovery through additional patient revenue
- Easy integration into existing hospital technology platforms; saving staff time