Value Based Care Coalition

ACO Resiliency: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Accountable Care Organization

UnityPoint Accountable Care
https://www.unitypoint.org/aco.aspx

Location

Operates in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin

Number of Clinicians

4,912 clinicians

Aligned Beneficiaries

Over 101,000 Medicare beneficiaries

Years in Next Gen

5 years

Payment Track

100% Risk

UnityPoint Health's COVID-19 Efforts: Remote Home Follow-Up

UnityPoint Health Accountable Care Organization (UnityPoint) serves patients in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. UnityPoint quickly recognized that COVID-19 patients would require careful monitoring, as their conditions could rapidly deteriorate. For COVID-19 patients who did not require inpatient care and who were recovering at home, UnityPoint established a Remote Home Follow-Up program to intervene as early as possible when necessary.

This program provided two levels of follow-up care depending on the patient's risk profile. Patients enrolled in the Basic level of care would receive daily text messages, powered by the CareSignal platform, prompting them to answer questions and input information about their current condition, including temperature and pulse oximeter readings. A team of clinical staff monitored the data and reached out to patients who were starting to experience difficulties to facilitate in-person or virtual primary and home health care, or emergency care, as needed.

Patients enrolled in the Advanced level of care experienced a similar process but received daily phone calls from UnityPoint clinical staff to assess their condition. This program was augmented in many cases by providing pulse oximeters to patients enrolled in the program to enable data reporting and collection. Through the Remote Home Follow-Up program, UnityPoint relieved stress on hospital resources and enabled patients to recover from home with the security of a strong and responsive safety net.

The NextGen Model Supports the UnityPoint Remote Home Follow-Up Program

The Next Generation ACO model enabled UnityPoint to develop the population health infrastructure needed to establish the Remote Home Follow-Up program. Next Generation ACO model participation enabled UnityPoint to create a fully integrated population health management program by unifying multiple care management efforts under one umbrella.

This population health infrastructure enabled UnityPoint to manage COVID-19 patient transitions across the care spectrum. It also empowered UnityPoint to identify patients that would benefit from the Remote Home Follow-Up program, enabling UnityPoint to monitor these patients and to intervene with the necessary level of care before the patient experienced a critical event or crisis. As a result, UnityPoint reduced emergency room visits and hospitalizations, and improved patient outcomes.

UnityPoint also leveraged many of the waivers available through Next Generation ACO model participation to provide the best care in the best environment for its patients. Deploying these programs allowed UnityPoint to connect with and care for patients in the safety and comfort of their homes, while ensuring that hospital beds remained available for patients requiring inpatient care.