



Success Story: Providence PACE

Expanding telehealth services for at-risk patients during a pandemic calls for the right technology and the right partner.

When Providence PACE was faced with COVID-19 care restrictions, they implemented the GrandPad telehealth solution and found not only an answer to their short-term need, but also an opportunity to enhance their capabilities with telehealth and virtual care.

“It was important that this initial rollout go smoothly, because we needed to ensure a consistent level of services for our participants, while encouraging them to embrace this new technology. Because health and well-being for seniors is about more than biometrics and physical health, we look forward to activating the full capabilities of GrandPad that will allow them to connect with family and friends and engage in activities that support cognitive health.”

Beth Schultz
Providence PACE
Director of Clinical Operations

Finding Opportunity, Partnership During Challenging Times

The care model at Providence PACE is built around in-person visits. With five locations in the Pacific Northwest, Providence PACE offers seniors complete medical care, adult daycare, and other services designed to help participants live independently as long as possible. When Washington was hit by COVID-19, it quickly became clear that in-person visits were no longer feasible for a population that was already at increased risk of serious health complications.

Serving that population required a particular kind of device. Many of Providence PACE’s participants face financial challenges that prohibit them from buying a smartphone or tablet, and many also lack internet service in their homes. Beth Schultz, director of operations for Providence ElderPlace, knew she needed a device that was intuitive for users and that she could easily explain to her own mother over the phone.

Schultz called it the luck of the draw that led her to GrandPad, but she soon realized the easy-to-use video calling feature and Partner Portal made GrandPad the clear choice. **Providence PACE was able to quickly implement a new approach and deliver a telehealth solution that allowed clinicians to easily and securely conduct remote visits, starting with their 930 participants in Washington.**

Pandemic Drives Need for Rapid Rollout

The pressures and rapid spread of COVID-19 called for a fast, seamless implementation and together, Providence PACE and GrandPad delivered. Within weeks, the team was able to gather and configure user data, deliver tablets to participants, and train PACE staff on the Partner Portal — all with minimal disruption to clinical services.

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Providence PACE initially ordered 100 GrandPads and currently has deployed 80 to participants. Early recipients were prioritized based on how much they were likely to benefit from the devices. Providence PACE looked in particular for participants who lived alone, and who didn't already have a smartphone. To help ensure a smooth rollout, the GrandPads were initially configured only to conduct video calls with providers. However, according to Schultz, additional GrandPad features have been activated now that GrandPads have been integrated into the organization's care model.

"We have found that patients are happy to know they can stay connected to their care team while still protecting their health," said Schultz. "While we miss seeing our participants in person, we're happy to have GrandPad to help us continue caring for them from a distance and we anticipate GrandPad will continue to play an important role in our care model even after COVID-19."

Technology Influences Care and Connections

Early response shows that PACE employees and participants are embracing the GrandPad technology, and they're finding uses for the tablets beyond simple check-ins.

Case 1: A Providence PACE nurse was able to use a GrandPad to teach a participant's relative to dress a wound that otherwise would have required an in-person visit. Left untreated, the wound might have required hospitalization or even amputation, but with telehealth intervention it is healing beautifully.

Case 2: Providence PACE staff used a GrandPad to conduct a safety assessment of a new enrollee's home and offer tips for improvements, all without requiring an in-person visit.

Beyond clinical care, GrandPads have demonstrated great value by creating connections for participants who may find themselves isolated at home. This is vitally important, as loneliness has been found to have a negative impact on the health of older adults and people with chronic conditions. One Providence PACE participant reported that she was excited to use her GrandPad to talk to her sister. And Providence PACE now uses GrandPads to offer a full calendar of group activities, from Bingo to worship services to yoga classes.

Overall, the experience has been positive enough that Schultz envisions using GrandPads long after participants are able to safely return to Providence PACE's centers. When only 30% to 40% of participants visit those centers regularly, GrandPads will provide an easy way to check-in between visits.

"The bottom line", Schultz said, "is that even if GrandPad wasn't designed specifically for Providence PACE, the device is ideal for our organization and our patients' needs."