

Marty Stempniak, Staff Writer

Follow @mstempniak

April 08, 2018

Vendor news

SNF aims to cut ER visits via telemedicine

Share this content:

- [facebook](#)
- [twitter](#)
- [linkedin](#)
- [google](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Print](#)

A New Jersey provider is testing out telemedicine services in its skilled-nursing facilities, in the hope that it might cut back on unnecessary ER visits.

The Ocean Healthcare Network in Lakewood, NJ, has installed such remote monitoring services in three post-acute care centers. It will tap into telemedicine during times when doctors are not on duty — overnight, during the weekend and on holidays.

Such services used in the pilot program are provided by TripleCare, which is based in New York City and specializes in remote monitoring for SNFs. During those off hours, docs will perform duties such as virtually visiting the bedside, and work in concert with Ocean Healthcare nurses to decide if patients can be treated in place or need a transfer to the hospital.

“It is known that one of the biggest challenges in skilled nursing care is ‘off’ hours — evenings and weekends,” Joseph Kiernan, Ocean Healthcare's chief strategy officer and senior vice president of network development, said in an announcement. “While we have physicians on staff, it isn't realistic to have doctors onsite around the clock to respond to every emergent situation. In the past, we would likely have sent patients to the ER to ensure their stability.”

Mary Jo Gorman, CEO of TripleCare, said there has been increasing interest from longterm care recently; the company has inked similar deals with 16 other SNFs in seven states over the last six months.

In late March, TripleCare announced another partnership with Asbury Communities, which has eight locations in four states. Providers are getting creative too, using telemedicine with other parts of the care team, such as remote doctors to examine wounds. Tele-mental health, too, is an emerging use, as providers find ways around specialist shortages.

“It's becoming broadly adopted in a lot of healthcare settings, and a lot of the kinks have been worked out from earlier years, for all kinds of provisions of telemedicine,” Gorman told McKnight's. “So adoption is strong.”

[From the April 2018 Issue of McKnight's Long Term Care News »](#)

0