

Case Study

Sodexo Dietitians at CarePoint Health introduce innovative and resourceful solutions during a critical time through telenutrition services



Business Challenge

CarePoint Health System consists of three community hospitals in northern New Jersey offering acute, primary and rehabilitation medical care. As a result of a refreshed strategic vision, CarePoint Health introduced new physician services in areas including surgery and weight management. These programs relied on access to outpatient nutrition care by Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs). However, the COVID-19 pandemic posed numerous challenges to the existing outpatient nutrition services as well as the client's need for expansion. The CarePoint team of Sodexo RDNs acted quickly to implement solutions to meet these obstacles.



“Telehealth” is defined as medical services provided remotely through phone or video conferencing.¹ Many barriers to in-person meetings (location, travel, time, weather, etc.) are reduced or eliminated.^{1,2} Improvements in diet quality, fruit and vegetable consumption, and dietary sodium intake are linked to telehealth nutrition counseling (also called “telenutrition”).³ Although patient satisfaction and positive health outcomes have been demonstrated with the use of remote technology, the widespread use of telehealth was minimal prior to 2020.^{2,4}

Sodexo's Solution

CarePoint Health dietitians quickly implemented the Sodexo telenutrition platform as a direct response to the challenges of providing nutrition services during the pandemic. Therefore, the healthcare system could seamlessly deliver both ongoing and expanded nutrition counseling services.

Telenutrition Platform

Sodexo offers telenutrition services to patients and the community. This innovative platform aims to help our clients, employees and patients feel more confident and secure while receiving Medical Nutrition Therapy. Our technology solution reaches patients safely and removes barriers to care such as mobility issues, challenging schedules or comfort around leaving home. Sodexo's telenutrition platform will help prevent the delay of patient care while accelerating the community's confidence and engagement with hospital care. This all-encompassing platform makes their care experience seamless.



Benefits to Clients and Patients



Expansion of services



Improved clinical outcomes



Revenue-generating service



Increased compliance and convenience for patients



Enhanced continuum of care

Results

Patient

423 total appointments completed in second half of 2021 after telenutrition launch (average of 71 per month)

398% increase in appointments in second half of 2021 compared to the first half of the year

70% of appointments utilized telenutrition in second half of 2021

Financial

\$50,584 estimated reimbursement revenue in second half of 2021 (based on average Medicare reimbursement for Medical Nutrition Therapy)

359 hours of dietitian revenue-generating productivity in second half of 2021

318% increase in revenue-generating productivity in second half of 2021

Continuum of Care

71 providers referred to outpatient nutrition services in second half of 2021

58% increase in providers from first half of 2021

>20 diagnoses referred for nutrition counseling in 2021

Most referred diagnoses (% of referrals):

- 50% bariatrics
- 16% adult weight management
- 7% diabetes

Data reflects new bariatric service launched during same time period. The total volume for 2019 was 538 and decreased to 230 in 2020. In 2021, volume climbed to 508 bringing the total back up and close to pre-pandemic numbers in only six months, due to implementation of telenutrition.



Telenutrition allows me to stay home with my baby and see the nutritionist; [it is] much easier than finding a babysitter!"

- CarePoint Health patient

Conclusion

The use of Sodexo's telenutrition platform at CarePoint Health facilitated outpatient nutrition services when in-person visits became difficult to conduct. The resourcefulness of the Sodexo RDN staff to quickly adopt this technology has had a positive influence on patient satisfaction, health outcomes and client support.

References

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