



## Virtual Care Center for a Federally Qualified Health Center

### Background

Today - as a leading Federally Qualified Health Center in Upstate New York, this customer serves seven sites and more than 30,000 lives. They strive to build a healthy community by providing health services and becoming a leader in health education and technology innovation. They were an early adopter of Telehealth technology to instill continued access to care for those who cannot get to a clinic, remote training, specialist consultations, remote diagnostics after hours, and so much more.

### Problem

In advocating and scaling virtual care units, this customer was using Zoom. Using Zoom created various workflow barriers, increasing the administrative burden on staff and patients. First, a patient must install the application, which presents challenges in tech literacy skills, not knowing App Store passwords, or other difficulties with setting up a new application. Furthermore, patients had to enter a password for Zoom meetings, which created a time burden for staff to copy and paste these details from Zoom into the eClinical Works appointment section and then text the patient. With the Zoom licensure cost, their organization had to share accounts between providers. As every encounter was an individual session to a single account, getting a patient from a check-in to a provider to a checkout process was inefficient, if not impossible.

### Solution

A custom Virtual Care center was designed that imitates a real-life patient experience. Most importantly, the Virtual Care Center is browser-based, offering expanded access to their network. Entry into this virtual space requires minimum patient effort and is also bilingual in Spanish. Virtual rooms separate patients into a receptionist area where they are checked in with the necessary steps. Only then can a patient be moved to one of the six serving locations or a care management/behavioral health support staff member. The clinical and physician roles can interact with the patient individually or three-way if a translator, specialist, or ancillary service provided is needed. After all clinical components of the encounter are complete, the patient is sent back to check out, schedule their follow-up, and tackle any next steps, such as getting details on a referral or verifying a prescription.

### Outcome

This technological innovation has been a breakthrough in enabling access for patients in rural areas far from hospitals or urban medical centers. **In May 2023 alone, more than 200 encounters occurred between the Behavioral Health and Medical department.** A physician survey showed that in contrast to previous tools, **the experience with the Virtual Care Center powered by Garage is 5/5.** Not only is this solution bringing efficiency to clinical workflows, better patient



experience, and increased patient engagement, but it also allows expansion its access by implementing this virtual care program in its Mobile Clinic that provides care directly to workers at farmworker housing. This allows patients with transportation barriers and connectivity issues to enter a Mobile Clinic and connect with providers and specialists across the customer's network.

Interested in learning how The Garage can empower your organization?  
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