

Bridging the Digital Divide with Allscripts Telehealth

/Success Story



"Telehealth-curious"

Amidst the hustle and bustle of New York City, SBH Health System serves the Bronx community with a multitude of ambulatory centers and a community care hospital that is the oldest continuing healthcare facility in New York City. SBH Health has partnered with Allscripts and used the Sunrise solution since 2008 and adopted the FollowMyHealth platform in 2011.

Prior to the spread of COVID-19, SBH Health considered itself to be "telehealth-curious," meaning that it was interested in implementing telehealth solutions but wasn't sure if its patients would find value in it compared to an in-person visit. SBH Health also worried if physicians would find the quality of telehealth visits comparable to in-person care and if the reimbursement value would make sense for Medicaid patients.

COVID-19 changes everything

Circumstances changed almost overnight when New York City became the United States epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic. SBH Health needed to quickly pivot to telehealth. In the scramble to assure patient safety, SBH Health initially implemented tools like FaceTime and Skype, but the organization knew it needed more.

"We wanted to make sure that a patient's experience with telehealth was more than just a video encounter. It was important that the patient had something tangible to walk away with after the encounter," said Dr. Jeeny Job, Chief Medical Informatic Officer at SBH Health System. "There had been some data suggesting that while patients feel comfortable with telehealth, it didn't quite live up to the perceptions of what a face-to-face visit was. So, we wanted to ensure a parity of those encounters and make sure there was clinical information that we could share with the patient after the visit."

Client Profile

SBH Health System

Bronx, New York

OVERVIEW

- 344 Staffed Beds
- 13,647 Discharges
- 63,762 Acute Days
- 5.89 Average Length of Stay
- 99,304 Emergency Department Visits
- 473,299 Outpatient Visits
- 778 Births
- 16,584 Total Surgeries
- 16 Operating Rooms
- 1,026 Physicians (primary)
- 2,406 Employees

ALLSCRIPTS SOLUTIONS

- FollowMyHealth®
- Sunrise™ Acute Care
- Sunrise™ Ambulatory Care
- Sunrise™ Pharmacy
- Sunrise™ Knowledge-based Medication Administration (KBMA)
- Sunrise™ Emergency Care
- Sunrise™ Knowledge-based Charting
- Sunrise™ Enterprise Scheduling
- Sunrise™ Secure Health Messaging
- Allscripts Lab™
- FollowMyHealth® Telehealth



Behavioral Health patients bridge the digital divide amid a surge of telehealth visits



Unprecedented product feature turnaround time for non-portal patients



"Allscripts suite of clinical technologies including EHR and Telehealth has enabled SBH Health System to provide high quality and safer care for our patients."

Dr. Jitendra Barmecha, SVP, CIO

"We didn't know if our psychiatry patients could bridge the digital divide. But with the help of our physicians, our patients have been able to, and we're really pleased with their adoption. We have been increasing the adoption rate in the population every day. There were 400 unique patients who logged in and had a visit with their psychologists last week alone."

Dr. Jeeny Job, CMIO

This desire to provide patients with more than just a video visit led SBH Health System leadership to FollowMyHealth, and the decision to expand its existing platform was three-fold.

First, the patient portal available through FollowMyHealth already had clinical information for patients to access, such as the clinical summary of the visit, pharmacy information or medication information and the ability to message providers after the visit. "We [added] the video option to the portal, as the access to the provider would create more value to our patients and engagement on the platform would go up," Job said. "We have found that as more solutions and opportunities for engagement increase on the portal, adoption goes up. So that was our thinking for why FollowMyHealth was going to be a good solution for telehealth."

Secondly, another important feature of FollowMyHealth was the new ability for non-portal users to use the platform for telehealth visits. "The FollowMyHealth team really impressed us. We had an initial demo in March and at the time the video solution was targeted to patients who were already a part of the portal and had login credentials," Job said. "Within a couple weeks of that initial demo, FollowMyHealth was showing us a solution where non-portal patients could engage with our providers, which is critically important. It was impressive in terms of turnaround time from hearing our sites' need to have non-portal patients accessing this."

Finally, SBH Health chose to expand FollowMyHealth because of its integration with Sunrise. "FollowMyHealth is an enterprise solution. Our scheduling from Sunrise Ambulatory Care seamlessly works with the FollowMyHealth video platform," Job said. "We didn't need to create a scheduling platform with a third-party vendor."

Successful workflows and an increasing adoption rate

SBH Health deployed the FollowMyHealth telehealth solution in its outpatient practices, including internal medicine, pediatrics, behavioral health and dermatology. The success of the deployment can be attributed to its workflow and strong partnership with Allscripts.

Once a patient agrees to a video visit, the front-office staff sends a link to download the FollowMyHealth app via text message. The staff member continues working with the patient to make sure the app is downloaded successfully and the patient knows what to expect the day of the telehealth visit. At the time of the appointment, the physician calls the patient to confirm the telehealth visit and another link is sent, prompting the patient to enter demographic information. The patient joins the "On-Demand" queue and the physician starts the video portion of the visit.

Overall, since the initial deployment in July 2020, SBH Health has seen an increase in video visit adoption, particularly in behavioral health. "We didn't know if our psychiatry patients could bridge the digital divide," Job said. "But with the help of our physicians, our patients could, and we're really pleased with their adoption. We have been increasing the adoption rate in the population every day. There were 400 unique patients that logged in and had a visit with their psychologist last week alone."

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