OPTIMIZING RESOURCES

PROVIDENCE PIVOTS DIGITAL CONSUMER TOOLS FOR COVID-19: Seattle-based Providence has developed an intuitive, transparent, on-demand patient experience with vendor partners such as Kyruus. The company develops patient-access tools focused around provider search, match and scheduling to be able to improve the patient experience and enable more streamlined and effective care coordination. Other initiatives developed through the Providence Ventures arm are: Xealth, enabling physicians to prescribe digital tools and services (e.g., an iPhone app to get a Lyft ride home) within the electronic health record workflow; and DexCare, which helps patients book quick care in retail clinics.

All of these tools and its online platform are available through the Providence Health Connect app. Providence began moving in this direction six years ago in response to anticipated disruption from big tech companies. It built a digital team that included about 120 software engineers. This team was able to quickly pivot the digital platform to meet the unique needs of COVID-19 patients. The platform was reoriented in about five days to address COVID-19, including the addition of a chatbot that helps direct patients between different modes of care and helps them self-assess whether they should seek care for the coronavirus.

TOOLS TO HELP SLOW THE VIRUS' SPREAD: The novel coronavirus is reshaping health care through technology. Recent advances, such as artificial intelligence, telehealth, virtual collaboration and data tracking are instrumental in addressing the virus and flattening the curve. In this podcast, Andy Shin, chief operating officer at the AHA Center for Health Innovation, and Kaveh Safavi, head of global health at Accenture, examine the role of technology in the fight against the pandemic.

COVID-19 CLINICAL REPORTING APP: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is working to automate generation and transmission of COVID-19 case reports to deliver data put in provider electronic health records directly to public health agencies. The initial version of the app, called eCR Now, will be available May 1. The goal is to give public health officials a more accurate, timely picture of the pandemic.

PROTECTING HEALTH CARE WORKERS

HERO REGISTRY AIMS TO PROTECT HOSPITAL WORKERS: The Duke Clinical Research Institute, part of the Duke University School of Medicine, recently launched the Healthcare Worker Exposure Response & Outcomes (HERO) Registry. The initiative seeks to crowdsource data and other information from hundreds of thousands of U.S. health care workers with the intent of building a knowledge base to better protect workers, and understand how the novel coronavirus affects people.

LARGEST STUDY OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS EXPOSED TO COVID-19: Rutgers University has launched the nation's largest prospective study of health care workers exposed to COVID-19. The study includes a series of clinical trials that will explore new drug treatments, antibody testing and long-term health tracking, and researchers hope to provide insight into how to treat the disease and prevent its spread. Separately, the trial also will determine whether some health care workers will develop immunity and, thus, could be first responders in the pandemic.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

ROADMAP TO RETURN TO NORMALCY: A road map developed by the American Hospital Association and American College of Surgeons, among other groups, states that resuming elective procedures should depend on whether a hospital or health system can quickly test patients and show a steady two-week decline in COVID-19 cases. Providers also should make sure they have enough personal protective equipment and staff, the groups said.

CARING WITH LIMITED CLINICAL RESOURCES: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, front-line clinicians and hospital leaders may face extraordinarily challenging decisions about how to deploy limited staff and resources. The AHA's Physician Alliance has assembled a collection of resources and tools for clinical teams as a community prepares for and responds to COVID-19.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY STEPS UP TO HELP PROVIDERS RESPOND

COVID-19 TRIAGE TOOLS: MedChat is donating its COVID-19 Triage Bot and Live Chat to all AHA members. The Triage Bot guides consumers through self-assessment based on CDC guidelines and your organizational protocol. Patients meeting your criteria are triaged directly to your telehealth visit workflow, an agent via Live Chat, drive-through testing and/or other care options. Live Chat seats can be used by nurses and physicians for telehealth, by contact center agents for scheduling, by hospital staff forced to self-isolate or other needs. For more information and to enroll your organization, contact Adam Smith at adam.smith@medchatapp.com or 336-451-7852.

SECURE FIELD COMMUNICATIONS: In response to the COVID-19 crisis, L3Harris Technologies is offering U.S. health systems no-cost access to its BeOn® Group Communications Service, a means of supporting nonmission-critical communications across groups that are fragmented by location, discipline and by the immediate and unprecedented increase in field communications demand. L3Harris Technologies specializes in high-speed, high-capacity secure communication systems used in extreme environments.

The AHA COVID-19 website has the latest tools and resources to help hospitals and health systems respond to the pandemic.

We want to hear from you! Please send your feedback to Bob Kehoe at rkehoe@aha.org.