

## Case Study: Healthcare System Virtual Care Optimized with Shared Services Solution

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### Overview

A large, Mid-Atlantic regional healthcare system sought to expand its care delivery model by implementing a robust virtual care program. The goal was to improve patient outcomes, expand access to care, and optimize staffing resources. Partnering with Hicuity Health, the system established a state-of-the-art operations center leveraging Hicuity's proprietary HUB technology while also constructing a hybrid staffing model, combining health system and Hicuity Health personnel, ensuring 24/7 coverage without compromising bedside care.

### Client Challenges

Previous attempts by the system to develop a virtual care program generated unsatisfactory results due to a lack of purpose-built technology for the task and exacerbated by staffing gaps. It became obvious to the health system leadership that to accomplish their goals, they were going to need the resources and expertise of a proven, experienced virtual care partner.

The major goals for the program were focused on the following:

- **Improve Patient Outcomes** – The initial focus was on improving care in the ICU, especially LOS (Length of Stay). ICUs across the 9-hospital system had significant variation in LOS. “Systemness” was needed.
- **Access to Care (longevity & sustainability)** - The virtual care program needed to meet current and future needs with the ability to flex to organizational evolution – including the ability to expand to cover additional service lines or flexing to meet census scale.
- **Optimize Staffing** – The system required certainty that its program would be appropriately staffed – a risk that was difficult to mitigate with confidence due to its full utilization of a very high percentage of its established clinical team and recruiting limitations within its market area. Without appropriate staff coverage of physicians, nurses, techs and support staff, even the best virtual care intentions will be at risk.

### Solution

To address these challenges, and after a robust survey of the market, the health system partnered with Hicuity Health to leverage Hicuity's **Shared Services Program**. Hicuity Health's Shared Service Program is designed to work WITH a health system's existing team and resources to deliver a turn-key virtual care capability. Also, as part of its program, Hicuity supports the system's program with best-in-class virtual care providers and clinicians, and contributes proven implementation, workflow, and management processes and training. These elements are individually and collectively integral to program efficacy and sustainability.

- Hicuity Health's proprietary HUB platform enables acute care telemedicine and workflow customization at scale. This also allows the health system to continue to add additional virtual care services such as virtual nursing, sitter and care@home/hospital@home.

- Telemedicine clinical best practice recommendations and operational expertise provides the health system a valuable head start while allowing the system the freedom to choose between system-developed clinical workflows or Hicuity's proven workflows and protocols.
- An experienced group of Hicuity Health clinicians, distributed across tightly interconnected operations, were ready to complement the in-house team and ensure that clinical coverage was never in doubt.

## Results

The resulting partnership delivered a "best in class" virtual care center that supports 9 facilities and more than 170 ICU beds with 24/7 continuous virtual care in less than 6 months. The center is staffed by a combination of health system's physicians, Hicuity Health's physicians, Hicuity Health's nurses and technologists.

A critical element of the success of a shared services program is that the bedside team sees the solution as "their own." It is their physicians leveraging workflows that their team had determined were best for their organization.

Clinical success was delivered on many levels, but specifically for LOS, system wide goals were met. Avg ICU LOS across system is now running at close to 0.5 day shorter than predicted. The program has also achieved the system's "systemness" goal having materially reduced site to site service variation.

Several of the best practices which led to clinical success are noted below:

- Monthly meetings between individual hospital bedside leaders and tele-ICU leaders
- Performed gap analysis of system ICU protocols for content, utilization and number of best practices
- Incorporated HUB automated glycemic control best practice interventions
- Utilize Tele-intensivist review for readiness to discharge in coordination with bedside team.

On the strength of these results and the foundation of the strong relationship built between the system and Hicuity, our Shared Services offering has expanded to include additional service lines, which continue to ramp up. These include virtual nursing, virtual sitter and virtual care@home/hospital@home services. The flexibility inherent in the program also opens the possibility to add additional service lines as system interest warrants.