

Primary and Specialty Care Access

Expanding What's Possible in Healthcare
through Telemedicine

John Korangy, MD, MPH, DABR
Co-Founder, CareClix



Recap and Introduction

In our last whitepaper, we examined the concept of virtual triage, and how it can be used to deliver better care faster in urgent care centers, private practices, emergency rooms, and hospitals. In previous papers, we have delved into how to incorporate telemedicine programs in your existing facility, how telemedicine can enhance chronic care management, and how telemedicine can improve outcomes and efficiencies in urgent care centers.



In our newest whitepaper, we'll explore how **telemedicine technologies can improve patient access to primary and specialty care, and how these same technologies can benefit a variety of users including:**



Medical Professionals



Healthcare Providers



Accountable Care Organizations



Multi-Specialty Medical Groups



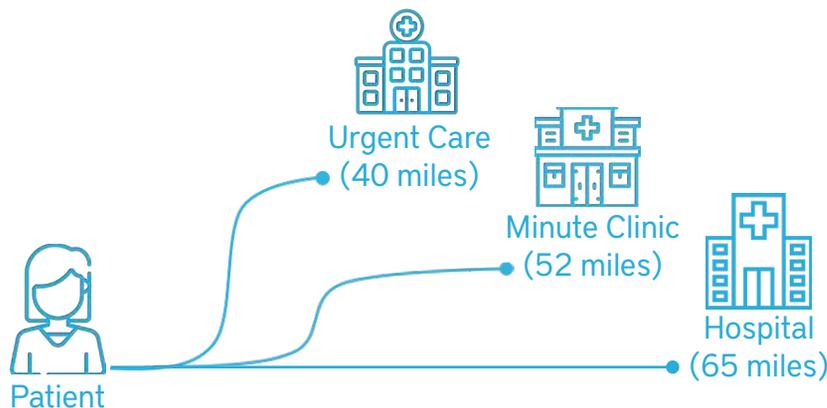
Healthcare Networks

Improving Primary & Specialty Care with Telemedicine

Throughout the country, telemedicine helps patients receive primary and specialized medical care, especially where barriers to access exist.

Rural areas, for example, are particularly hard hit in the realm of access to medical care. In the United States, **rural parts of the country account for roughly 65% of the areas with primary care health professional shortages.**¹ Compounding the problem is that specialists tend to be concentrated in larger, urban academic medical centers.

Rural residents often face long travel distances to see a specialist after what can be months waiting for an appointment.



With CareClix, patients in rural areas can see primary care physicians and specialists from the comfort of their own homes. And to the extent that these patients do have to travel for medical care, they can reduce the number of appointments. By complementing in-person visits with virtual appointments, and by utilizing their hospital or clinic’s on-site telemedicine suite, patients can connect directly with specialists instead of scheduling separate appointments.

Telemedicine is being implemented across the country, and throughout the world, as a means to expand access to medical care. Below are some real-world examples of how telemedicine is increasing patients’ access to medical care:

- The Veterans Administration is using telemedicine to expand their reach and serve a larger number of former military personnel in remote areas of the United States and abroad.²
- The University of New Mexico has employed telemedicine technology to successfully control Hepatitis C outbreaks throughout the largely rural state.³

Primary Care

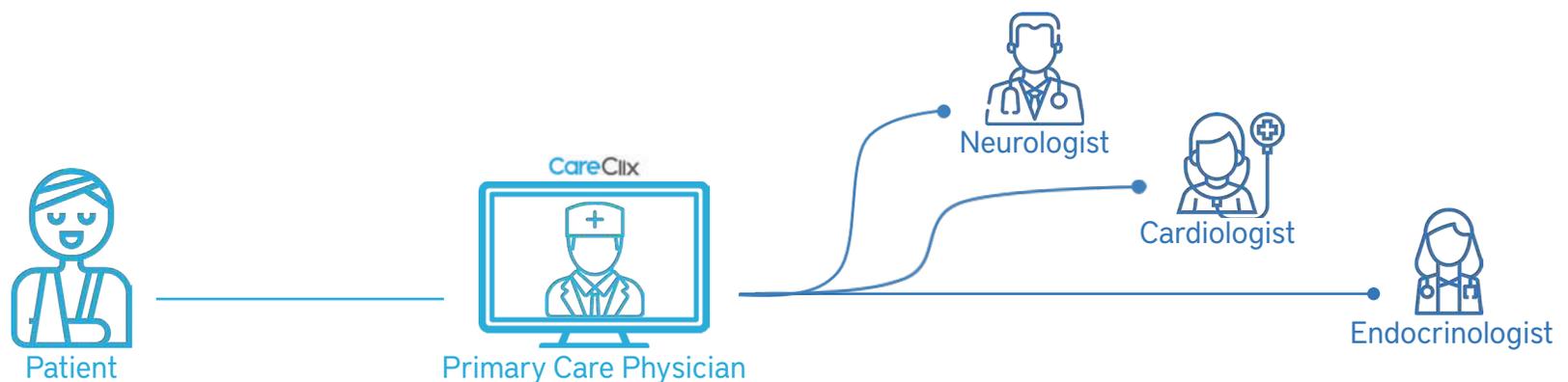
Primary care physicians can use telemedicine to see patients who have difficulty traveling to a doctor's office, who live in faraway locations, or who require frequent check-ins for chronic conditions.

In the past, primary care typically involved a doctor seeing a patient in person, and then referring the patient to satellite offices as needed. With CareClix video conferencing technology, patients can see their primary care physicians without having to travel to an office. Patients can also use CareClix to consult with specialists either from home or from their regular doctor's office.

CareClix in Action

Consider a patient struggling with diabetes. CareClix allows the patient to communicate with their doctor online via an online exam room, to transfer and upload medical records electronically, and to transmit information from medical devices directly to their physician.

In the event that the diabetic patient needs more specialized services than what a primary care physician can offer, doctors can refer patients to specialists or care teams.



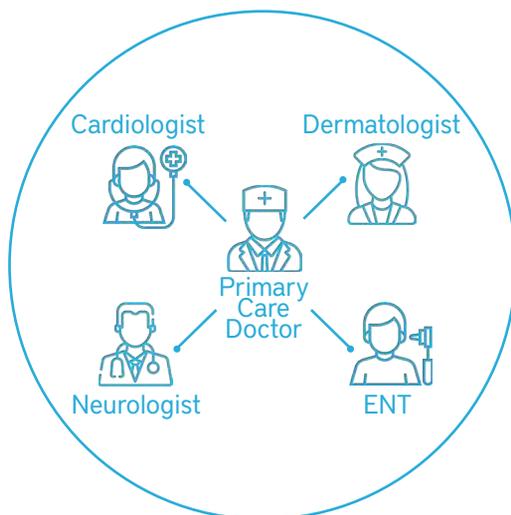
CareClix allows patients to consult with primary care physicians virtually without having to travel long distances.

The primary care physician can then refer the patient to a specialist or care team who they can also meet virtually .

Specialty Care

CareClix telemedicine technology allows patients to see specialists sooner, and without the relatively common burden of having to travel hundreds of miles for care. In the past, travel time has been challenging for patients seeking specialized medical care. Telemedicine is changing that.

Through online exam rooms, CareClix technologies can facilitate communication between a patient, primary care physicians, specialists, and multi-specialty medical groups with the electronic transfer of medical histories, vital signs, and image sharing. This allows doctors and specialists to remain informed of real-time symptoms and vital signs to provide more accurate, efficient remedies.



CareClix in Action

For a patient suffering from cancer, for example, CareClix can connect the patient to specialists all over the country – and the world – without the patient actually having to leave their town. Medical carts and equipment can be installed in a patient’s home or alternatively, the patient can utilize telemedicine suites at his/her local medical facility to facilitate the electronic transfer of information to any number of specialists, instantly.



Case Study: Providing Primary & Specialty Care to Students at Howard County Schools

Routine doctor's visits can take hours, and keep kids out of school. On the other hand, foregoing medical care in the event of illness or injury can make a child's recovery time longer, preventing kids from attending school for days at a time, or longer. The Georgetown University Health Policy Institute notes how relatively routine ailments, like asthma, keep many low-income students from going to school because they lack the necessary medical care to manage the condition.

Thanks to CareClix, telemedicine technology is currently being used at Howard County Schools to provide primary and specialty care to over 10,000 students while in school using doctors from Johns Hopkins and University of Maryland health systems.⁴ CareClix's telemedicine devices allow for direct remote physician consultations between schools in these districts, and pediatricians at some of the nation's premier health institutions.

Thanks to CareClix, Howard County students are now treated by top pediatricians from:



Using CareClix Exam technology and online medical suites, students in Howard County public schools can immediately consult with doctors in the event of an illness or injury. Physicians can examine and diagnose sore throats, eye and ear infections, skin rashes, allergies, and respiratory illnesses.

Students receive care at no cost to families.⁵ Doctors who see students via videoconferencing can prescribe medication for children to pick up at the pharmacy.

Physicians can also recommend follow-up care, or refer students to the emergency room or a specialist, depending on the nature of the medical problem. Effectively, CareClix is making healthcare accessible and affordable for students, and keeping them from missing school in the process.

Benefits for Care Providers

There are obvious patient benefits to telemedicine – better health outcomes, less travel time, more convenient care. But telemedicine has a lot to offer care providers, too.



Benefits for Primary and Specialty Care Providers

To begin, telemedicine technology [allows primary care providers and specialists to save time](#). With videoconferencing and electronic data transfers, physicians can see more patients more often, and can increase the efficiency of monitoring chronic conditions.



Benefits for Multi-specialty Medical Groups

Multi-specialty medical groups can use CareClix technology [to securely and immediately share information about patients, reducing paperwork headaches and process inefficiencies](#). Further, specialists within a team can communicate via CareClix apps, even if the team members happen to be in entirely different geographic locations.



Benefits for Healthcare Networks

Healthcare networks, meanwhile, can employ CareClix [to ensure that insurers, doctors, patients, medical professionals, and pharmacies are all on the same page](#), both in terms of care, as well as insurance coverage and financial considerations.



Benefits for Accountable Care Organizations

In coordinating care for Medicare patients, accountable care organizations can benefit from CareClix platforms [to securely communicate between doctors, patients, hospitals, and other providers](#). Videoconferencing, secure image transfers, and EHR integration all allow for immediate attention to a patient's medical condition, no matter how many people are involved or where they are located.

Conclusions and Next Steps

This whitepaper provides context for how primary care physicians and specialists can incorporate telemedicine to improve their practice and to serve a wider number of people. This paper also addresses the benefits of telemedicine, which has been proven to improve health outcomes in primary care and specialized medical settings.

As your office or facility plans an entry or expansion of telemedicine capabilities, keep our strategic healthcare and business concepts in mind. Know your market, work with your providers, and cater to patient demand for convenience and quality care delivery.

When CareClix partners with health systems, we offer a solution that is branded to our partner organization and geared to your targeted population of patients and providers.

After reading this guide, please feel free to contact us anytime if you would like to learn more about any of the concepts featured in this whitepaper or if you'd like to learn more about how CareClix can help your organization. We can be reached by phone anytime at [1 \(855\) CARECLX](tel:1855CARECLX), or by email at info@careclix.com.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Korangy'.

John Korangy, MD, MPH, DABR
Co-Founder, CareClix

About CareClix

CareClix provides comprehensive, integrated telehealth applications, technology, and services that health systems can self-brand. As the only open telemedicine platform, CareClix provides out-of-the-box support for the most popular telemedicine carts, EHRs, and over 200+ medical devices. Healthline ranks CareClix as the #1 telemedicine company because we offer a seamless solution with advanced technical features and a dedicated team who helps tailor solutions to each of our clients. We've used this platform to help our customers implement telemedicine programs impacting over 4 million patients a year and counting.

Email

info@careclix.com

Call us

[+1-855-CARECLX \(227-3259\)](tel:+1855-CARECLX)



Sources

- 1 - <https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ruralhealth/pdf/ruralhealthprofessionsguidance.pdf>
- 2 - <https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20120717scanecho.html>
- 3 - <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/newsletter/case-study-project-echo-expands-access-specialty-care-rural-patients>
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