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## VAL VERDE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

### Keeps Patients Engaged at Home Through Expanse Remote Patient Monitoring

Providers and patients work together remotely during COVID-19



Located in the small border town of Del Rio, TX, providers at Val Verde Regional Medical Center recognized that getting to and from medical appointments could be a burden for some patients — particularly older people and those managing chronic conditions. And once the COVID-19 pandemic forced more people to stay in their homes, reaching these patients in safe and convenient ways became the priority.

#### Making care more accessible

In order to be successful with remote patient monitoring, leaders at Val Verde knew they would need to be able to easily connect to patients at home, despite the fact that about 35% of Del Rio households do not have access to broadband internet. Since Wi-Fi couldn't be a prerequisite for any of the devices they chose to send home with patients, they adopted scales and blood glucose monitors from Raziel Health that would work with a cellular connection. Once plugged in, the Raziel Health-provided cellular connection works in the background, without the need for internet connectivity, to quickly transmit patient vitals to the cloud and to Val Verde's Expanse EHR.

**"It was very important for us to employ technology that could keep providers connected to everyone in our community, regardless of whether they have internet access," Willey said. "It's been an essential tool for us to strengthen the ties between clinicians and patients, especially when in-office visits are not possible."**

**"We wanted something easy to use, that our patients could just plug in, and they'd be up and running. A remote patient monitoring program that worked effortlessly with MEDITECH's patient portal and Raziel Health's remote care solution checked all our boxes," said Val Verde CIO Keith Willey.**

## AT A GLANCE

Val Verde Regional Medical Center (Del Rio, TX) includes a rural, acute care hospital with 93 beds, a Level IV Trauma Center, and six clinics. Its service area includes Val Verde County and parts of Kinney, Maverick, and Edwards Counties.



#### What Val Verde's patients think:

"I can do this, it's not hard."

"I like that I can see my results in the patient portal right after I take my BP."

"I am impressed with the care."

#### What Val Verde's providers think:

"I can easily view real-time, patient-generated data in my Clinical Data Summary screen."

"Now I can monitor a patient's blood pressure readings in real time, instead of waiting a week to see the handwritten logs."

"I don't need to have an in-office visit just to adjust a patient's medications. I have all the data in MEDITECH to know whether I need to modify a treatment regimen."



## How Expanse Remote Patient Monitoring works

Val Verde set up the following process to engage patients and make care more accessible:



Patients with diabetes and hypertension monitor their readings from home.



Physicians have immediate access to real-time, patient-generated data.



Physicians quickly follow up with patients and recommend appropriate care actions.

## Increasing patient engagement

Val Verde started its RPM program with patients who have diabetes and hypertension, since they would often go months between in-person appointments. These patients began monitoring their glucose and blood pressure readings from home, giving physicians access to this real-time, patient-generated health data from their Clinical Data Summary screen in Expanse.

“It used to be very difficult for physicians to keep up with disease progression in these chronically ill patients,” said Willey. “Fortunately, our patients have found the devices very easy to operate, and they can immediately track their results on the MEDITECH patient portal. Patient engagement and compliance have improved, because people understand their conditions better and can see the trends. At the same time, clinicians have real-time information available in the EHR and can take immediate action — such as changing meds or bringing patients in for emergency appointments — if they see abnormal vitals coming in.”

**“While COVID-19 has forced us to change some of the ways we deliver care, it has also served as an opportunity for us to test the waters on new technologies, to the benefit of both our providers and our patients,” said Willey.**

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