



Reduce Hospital Length of Stay During the COVID-19 Surge

Use this guide to help reduce length of stay for COVID-19 patients and increase hospital bed capacity

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How HRS Can Support Home Health with RPM and Telehealth Solutions

The resurgence of COVID-19 cases puts pressure on health systems to increase bed capacity, manage PPE, and address staffing shortages. By deploying remote patient monitoring (RPM) and telehealth, many COVID-19 patients can be discharged early to recover at home creating new bed capacity and reducing the burden on health systems. Home health providers play a critical role in helping acute care hospitals reduce length of stay for COVID-19 recovering patients.

Use this guide to understand strategies for how to reduce length of stay.

Increase Bed Capacity with HRS' COVID-19 Recovery at Home Plan

In many cases, patients diagnosed with COVID-19 are eligible to be discharged from the hospital early to continue treatment at home. Home health organizations can support this strategy by incorporating RPM and telehealth into a patient's care plan. Follow these 10 recommended steps to help your care team understand which COVID-19 patients are eligible for home health and how to successfully use HRS' RPM and telehealth solutions to manage patients effectively at home.

Follow These 10 Recommended Steps:

1. Work with your discharge planning team and the assigned hospitalist to identify eligible patients that meet the clinical criteria for early discharge. Discharge criteria may include:
 - No fever for 24 hours
 - Resolving or clear chest x-ray
 - Requires 2 liters of nasal oxygen or less
 - Competent and willing caregiver in the home
2. Ensure the patient is discharged home with all required medications—ideally delivered from the hospital pharmacy.
3. Confirm oxygen therapy and any other equipment and supplies are ordered to be delivered to the patient's home the same day.
4. The home health registered nurse arrives at the patient's home that day to initiate home health care, deploy the HRS technology, and instruct the patient and caregiver in its appropriate use. The patient is assigned [HRS' COVID-19 Recovery Care Plan](#).
5. The patient sends biometric readings and answers the COVID-19 symptom survey questions via the HRS platform at least twice a day for 3-to-5 days. Biometric readings and survey answers can be sent once daily as soon as a patient's condition is stable. The patient also watches the assigned COVID-19 video clips daily within [HRS' COVID-19 Recovery Care Plan](#).

6. The on-call home health nursing staff is responsible for monitoring the patient's biometric and other readings after hours and coordinating care with the assigned hospitalist.
7. The nurse completes daily virtual visits with the patient via the HRS platform. An assigned hospitalist also connects virtually with the patient via the HRS platform to conduct additional health evaluations, write orders, and provide supplementary care, as needed.



HRS offers a [Best Practice Virtual Visit Guide](#) for the nurse to reference.

8. To reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and to save critical PPE, no further in-person visits to the patient's home are required unless clinically indicated. A home health team member can re-enter a patient's home once the patient is symptom-free for 10 days. Until then, all patient visits are conducted virtually via HRS' RPM and telehealth technology.

Please note: The decision to waive the Home Health Low Utilization Payment Adjustment (LUPA) Threshold when considering the health and safety of both the patient and staff is unique to every organization. It is important to establish the following with your care team: **While the episode may qualify as a LUPA, the reimbursement may cover the direct care cost of the episode.**

9. HRS technology solutions allow a patient to access other critical care resources virtually via the platform to support the patient's recovery at home, such as access to a social worker, and physical or occupational therapy.
10. Once the patient's condition is stable—and all the goals for care are met—the patient is ready to transition to their primary care physician.

Is It Time to Scale-Up Your Current RPM and Telehealth Program?

As the U.S. struggles through another dark chapter in this COVID-19 pandemic, our country continues to set new records for cases almost daily. Amid this public health emergency, our frontline health care staff are stretched beyond limits, our hospitals are quickly reaching maximum bed capacity, and PPE shortages are becoming a reality—again.

As a current client of HRS, [now is a critical time to evaluate if you're deploying RPM and telehealth solutions most effectively](#) to help relieve some of the challenges and pressures your organization faces during this pandemic. If you're not familiar with how HRS can support your organization, we offer solutions, product features, and services to help scale-up your current telehealth program:

- **24/7 biometric monitoring:** Gain real-time insight into patients' vitals using HRS equipment to track blood pressure, temperature, oxygen level, and more; this enables clinicians to intervene accordingly and prevent adverse outcomes if a patient's health status changes.
- **Symptom surveys:** COVID-19-specific questions inform clinicians throughout the recovery process, providing an emotional and physical evaluation of a patient's health.

- **Virtual visits:** Augment in-person visits and provide specialty care outside the hospital using the HRS tablet, protecting both patients and clinicians during the pandemic.
- **Educational resources:** Use embedded videos and quizzes to educate patients on COVID-19, including how to identify and report symptoms, and how to keep themselves and others safe.
- **PatientConnect Mobile:** Rapidly scale your RPM and telehealth program to reach a broad array of patient populations, adapting to potential equipment shortages and delays.
- **CaregiverConnect:** Integrate the caregiver into a patient's care plan by providing an additional layer of support to patients, helping to reduce loneliness the patient may experience during extended isolation.

HRS' RPM and telehealth solutions help home health providers quickly mobilize efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Reach out today](#) to learn more about how to scale-up your program.