



## Stretched Too Thin

# 5 KPIs to Measure Your Remote Care Program's Ability to Manage Staff Shortages

Staff shortages are one of the most pressing problems in healthcare today. Telehealth can alleviate the crisis, but not all remote care programs are created equally.

## A national emergency

The healthcare staff shortage has reached a critical level. Since February 2020, the number of healthcare workers is down 1.1%. As a result, Americans face significant delays in receiving medical care, even in emergency situations, as [reported by patient safety nonprofit ECRI](#). Similar patterns are being seen around the world, with patients facing increasingly dangerous delays in receiving care.

The American Hospital Association has called the shortage a national emergency. While staff shortages existed before COVID, the pandemic has made them far more severe, partly due to the ["physical and emotional toll that hospital workers have endured in caring for patients."](#) Over the next several years, these shortages are expected to intensify in all healthcare professions.

Contributing to the shortage is the fact that healthcare workers have been retiring at a faster rate than expected. Some workers are simply aging out, while others are retiring early due to burnout. As the need for healthcare workers rises, many states will be unable to keep up with demand.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many of the deepest disparities in health and access to health care services and exposed vulnerabilities in the health care system. The pandemic also has underscored the vital role that physicians and other health care providers play in our nation's health care infrastructure and the need to ensure we have enough physicians to meet America's needs."

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**AAMC President and CEO  
David J. Skorton, MD.**

# Seeking solutions

**Training programs** to increase the number of staff are already in place in many areas. [Sanford Health has created a training program](#) that will create eight new medical residencies and fellowships in specialty areas to improve healthcare access. However, training programs take years to make an impact. The staff currently being trained will not be ready to alleviate shortages in the near future.

**Counseling and better support systems** are being implemented to improve staff morale and reduce burnout.

Michelle Gaskill-Hames, chief operating officer for Kaiser Permanente's Southern California and Hawaii markets, [explains](#) that although the situation has improved since the early months of COVID in terms of cases and deaths, hospitals must address the anguish workers have experienced since the start of the pandemic. "As our surges are becoming smaller, more people are vaccinated and hospitalizations are down, many people are looking to put the pandemic behind them, but in the healthcare space, it's not that easy," she says. "There are just layers of anxiety, stress, and fear. That doesn't just go away."

Since June 2020, [Mount Sinai Health System](#) in New York has offered staff members no-cost counseling sessions as part of the launch of its Center for Stress, Resilience, and Personal Growth. These important support measures are vital, but for some staff members, it's too little, too late.

**Improving key care metrics** is vital to evaluating solutions to the crisis. These metrics include improving visit resolution, visit duration, ED diversion, readmission rates, and staff utilization across geographies.

Focusing on these key care metrics can have both an immediate and long-term impact on the staff shortage crisis. It can reduce pressure on staff and time spent per patient, freeing up staff to work with other patients.

## Remote care must be done right

Remote care, when done right, plays an integral role in addressing these key care metrics. TytoCare's innovative remote care has a maximum impact on these metrics.



### 1 Visit resolution

While telehealth can be an efficient way for clinicians to see patients, telehealth visit resolution rates are low. Traditional telehealth lacks the ability to carry out medical tests, without which staff often cannot make an accurate diagnosis. Patients will then still require an in-person appointment or end up in the ED - further adding to staffing pressures and wait times.

TytoCare offers remote physical exams, enabling high visit resolution rates. [In some studies](#), 98% of visits were fully resolved using TytoCare. 91% of employees who experienced a TytoCare visit in the workplace reported that undergoing a remote physical exam [enabled them to remain at work](#).

Telehealth with remote physical exams allows staff to resolve patients' issues fully remotely, without taking up the time of an in-person doctor. Tracking your remote care program's visit resolution KPI lets you determine whether your remote care solution is indeed helping relieve pressure on your staff.

98%

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of employees reported that experiencing remote physical exam enabled them to remain at work.



## 2 Visit duration

Telehealth visits are shorter than in-person appointments, which allows staff to treat more patients in less time. More efficient healthcare allows clinicians to see more patients. It reduces wait times for patients, making them happier and more pleasant to deal with. It also ensures that clinicians' working hours remain manageable.

Remote physical exams with TytoCare can lower visit duration significantly without compromising on care. In a study of over 1000 patients, wait times and visit duration times with TytoCare were significantly lower than average outpatient visit times.

In the study, 92% of patients successfully resolved their visits with no need for a subsequent in-person follow up visit. To be impactful, better visit resolution and lowered visit duration should work hand in hand. TytoCare allows you to achieve both of these goals.

Clalit, the largest HMO in Israel, found that over 1,000 patients' wait times and visit duration were significantly lower with TytoCare:

5.17  
minutes

General practitioner visit  
with TytoHome

6.59  
minutes

Pediatric visit  
with TytoCare

22  
minutes

Average outpatient  
visit in the US



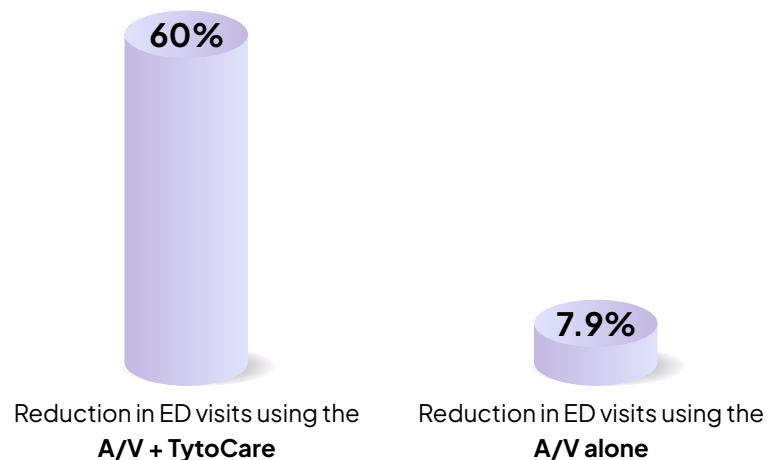
## 3 ED diversion

It's best to keep people out of the ED if they don't have to be there. Patients receive more appropriate care outside of the ED, and ED beds are best saved for those who really need them. When patients occupy ED beds for long periods of time, flow is limited, which has negative ramifications for both patients and staff.

Remote physical exams have been proven to reduce ED transfers in a variety of use cases. In one case, an integrated delivery network saw a 60% reduction in ED visits when using TytoCare compared with a 7.9% reduction for those who used traditional telehealth. In another, ED diversion rose 40.5% and led to an 18–30x ROI.

Senior care homes showed an 80% decrease in ED transfers when TytoCare was implemented, allowing 93% of residents to be treated in place. This has a massive impact on senior care home staff to provide better care to residents on site, and on local ED staff, where reducing unnecessary visits allows clinicians to focus on the patients who really need to be there.

ED overuse impacts staff wellbeing, patient safety, and overall costs. Tracking this KPI lets you determine the impact of your remote care plan on patient and provider welfare, and on staff capacity.





## 4 Readmission rates

Medical staff aim to send patients home from the hospital or clinic in good health. Sending patients home when they're ready helps to ensure they stay home and don't head right back to the hospital. When discharged patients have the right tools to monitor their recovery remotely, whether in a hospital-at-home scenario or with a less hands-on approach, pressure on hospitals and clinicians is eased. Lowering readmission rates reduces work for clinicians, while keeping hospitals emptier and better functioning.

What is telehealth's role in reducing readmissions? While staff can call patients to check on how they're feeling, traditional telehealth can't reliably assess their recovery. Remote physical exams allow staff to obtain vital health checks to successfully monitor discharged patients.

Remote physical exams with TytoCare minimized ED readmissions at Henry Ford Hospital by providing close, meaningful monitoring from home. To alleviate staff strain and ED crowding, be sure your remote care plan effectively lowers readmission rates.

## HENRY FORD HEALTH

4,000+ visits:

**45.8%** Readmission avoidance rate

"Our family has had the opportunity to use this service for my 100-year-old father-in-law over the weekend... First – my husband was just blown away with this technology. We have worked hard to keep our parents out of the ED and hospital this year. The fact that he could be evaluated and through the Tyto device, Dr Drake could address the fluid in his lungs was pretty amazing, let alone get the IV Lasix treatment he needed in his kitchen!"



**Mobile Integrated Health Patient Caregiver**



## 5 Staff utilization across geographies

A key challenge, particularly in rural areas, can be staffing the number of clinics needed to serve patients across a wide geographic spread. Having clinicians in all rural clinics across a county or even a state is costly, impractical, and can be a poor use of clinicians' time and resources, particularly if many of those clinics are empty most of the time. While they may treat only a handful of patients in each location, the need for coverage in all areas leaves clinicians overworked, frustrated, and isolated.

Remote physical exams enable 'hub and spoke' models with a central location such as a hospital or telehealth hub that houses clinicians, with local clinics staffed by nurse assistants or other caregivers. Other in-facility clinics such as schools, offices, and care homes can also utilize this approach.

Remote physical exams are needed for hub and spoke models to be fully effective. Traditional telehealth cannot provide the visit resolution needed to meet the needs of staff across geographies.

TytoCare allows various settings and geographies to meet staffing challenges. Avel eCare partnered with TytoCare to support caregivers while providing patients with safe, high-quality treatment in place. Avel eCare serves over 3 million patients in over 450 sites spread across 30 states. Care providers shared that telehealth with remote physical exams made their workload more manageable and greatly improved their quality of life.

"Implementing TytoCare has tremendously reduced my on-call time. Before I was on-call all but 4 days a month. Now I'm only on-call 4 days a month. This change has greatly improved my quality of life."



**Avel eCare nurse, Assisted Living**



Telehealth has the potential to reduce the strain on healthcare workers and alleviate staff shortages. Many remote plans exist, but only one offers remote physical exams with a proven track record of measurably improving your KPIs. Careful assessment of each of these measures will let you determine whether your remote care plan closes care gaps, improves quality performance indicators, and successfully addresses the needs of your staff.