

Telehomecare from Osler brings patient care closer to home

For patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and congestive heart failure (CHF), managing care from the comfort of home is now possible with the Telehomecare program.

Through Telehomecare, patients in the Central West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) can be wirelessly connected to nurses who will provide remote monitoring and regular health coaching sessions to help these individuals better manage their conditions.

William Osler Health System (Osler) is the host for Telehomecare in the LHIN, while the Central West Community Care Access Centre, Headwaters Health Care Centre, family health teams, primary care providers and other health service providers are playing an essential role in referring patients to the program.

“Telehomecare allows us to provide high quality patient-centric services across our region to effectively manage complex diagnoses like COPD and CHF,” commented Dr. Frank Martino, chief of Family Medicine with Osler and primary care lead for the LHIN. “It will support the work done by family physicians, allowing us to work as part of a collaborative team that involves the patient in the model of self-care.”

As part of this program, patients will continue to have appointments with their existing health care providers as needed, while working with dedicated nurses to set goals and learn about how to manage their health through easy-to-use home monitoring equipment. The Telehomecare nurses provide regular updates to each patient's primary care provider to help form care plans and address urgent issues.

“Telehomecare is an excellent example of how we can use innovative technologies and methods of care to support patients with complex conditions,” said Osler President and CEO Matthew Anderson. “This collaborative approach will help lead to better information sharing, faster treatment and will help ensure that patients receive the right care, in the right place, and at the right time. Osler is proud to be working with its local health care partners to provide Telehomecare services to patients across the Central West LHIN.”

The goals of Telehomecare include improved patient self-management, reduced emergency department visits and fewer hospital admissions. Interpretive support is available upon request to patients who do not speak English or French.

“Telehomecare advances one of the key priorities in the third Integrated Health Services Plan (IHSP 3) which focuses on improving access to care through the use of modern information technology,” LHIN CEO Scott McLeod said.

The Telehomecare initiative is funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Additionally, the Ontario Telemedicine Network is providing the technology, education for nurses and support services for the program.

More information about Telehomecare can be found on Osler's website at www.williamoslerhs.ca or on the Central West LHIN site at www.centralwestlhin.on.ca