

FAQ: TeleTriage Program



Seeing a patient as quickly as possible upon entry into the emergency department (ED) is critical. The efficiency and workflow of having a clinician in triage affects every portion of the patient care journey. Teletriage is a way to maximize resources at the literal front door of the ED.

Q: What is the difference between team triage and teletriage?

A: The standard team triage system has an NP/PA stationed in the triage area that works closely with the triage nurse, doing a brief examination and history to get initial orders in and the patient workup started. Similarly, teletriage allows a clinician and the nurse to see patients, quickly and simultaneously, and get a jumpstart on their care, via a teletriage cart.

Q: Are the teletriage clinicians consistent?

A: Yes. There is a small team of off-site teletriage clinicians, and in most cases, the clinicians will regularly cover the same hospitals to build relationships and rapport with their in-person counterparts.

Q: How many patients can the teletriage clinicians see?

A: Teletriage has the potential to double the amount of patients clinicians can see. With the improved workflow, the virtual clinicians can see 8-10 patients per hour without negatively impacting quality.

Q: Is the teletriage coverage model flexible?

A: Absolutely. For the smaller census, teletriage allows clinicians to cover more than one hospital at a time, so even smaller hospitals can have a dedicated clinician in triage. EDs can also immediately request another clinician and get extra assistance during demand surges.

Q: How does the teletriage program affect patient safety and experience?

A: With better front-end resource deployment, virtual clinicians can quickly address patient concerns and boost metrics with reduced door-to-provider times and LWOT rates. Teletriage model also creates a new avenue for reassessment, following up with patients after initial orders have been carried out before being moved back to an ED room.

Q: What factors make teletriage more successful?

A: Teletriage is most successful when the hospital or health organization has a fully integrated EMR system, a supportive IT team, and a culture of open communication.

Teletriage allows hospitals and health systems to leverage technology and imagination to improve patient experience and increase clinician satisfaction.

