

# Telestroke helped Franciscan Health expand access to care in underserved communities



## Franciscan Health

One of the largest Catholic health care systems in the Midwest, Franciscan is nationally recognized for healthcare excellence. Franciscan offers a comprehensive range of health services that embody their commitment to minister with joy, care and compassion according to the ideals of St. Francis of Assisi.

### Background

- 12 hospital campuses
- 19k employees, including 850 physicians serving Indiana and Illinois
- Offers a comprehensive range of health services

### Virtual Care Offering

- Emergent Care

## Expanding access to neurology services in central Indiana

Prior to engaging with Teladoc Health, Franciscan relied on two full-time neurologists based out of its certified primary stroke center in Lafayette to cover a large region of west-central Indiana. The specialists provided general neurology and stroke coverage for 300 beds across Lafayette, their Critical Access hospital in Rensselaer and a smaller hospital in Crawfordsville.

Treating stroke patients as quickly as possible is critical to limiting the impact of a stroke and improving a patient's outcome potentials. Transferring patients from Rensselaer (40m north) and Crawfordsville (30m south) to Lafayette required significant time and expense — and made it difficult for patients experiencing a stroke to receive timely care.

### RESULTS

**5x**

**increase** in acute neurology visit volume at Lafayette<sup>1</sup>

**~20%**

**transfers** avoided per month by supporting stroke services<sup>1</sup>

*(at Rensselaer and Crawfordsville hospitals)*

**<60min**

**reduced** door-to-needle time (often as low as 45 minutes)<sup>1</sup>

“The patients love it. We’ve gotten feedback that they feel like rock stars because they feel like they’re on TV. And they’re able to form strong connections with the physicians, just as they would if they were in person.”

– Craig A. Miller, FACHE, Administrative Director, Ambulatory Services, Franciscan Health



**Adjacent Health** was previously the physician services arm of Teladoc Health for Hospitals and Health Systems. It became an independent organization in 2023. As the leading national provider of virtual clinical services to hospitals and health systems, **Adjacent Health provides 24/7 support from board-certified neurologists experienced in virtual care.**

### Broadening the scope of care







In order to fulfill their service goals and uphold the ideals of Franciscan care, Franciscan implemented Teladoc Health's Emergent Care offering in late 2020, replacing their retiring in-person neurology unit with Teladoc Health's physician services team, now known as Adjacent Health, to provide teleneurology service for all three hospitals.

Teladoc Health's teleneurology solution helped Franciscan reduce the need for transfers to Lafayette by allowing the health system to deliver advanced specialty care at Rennselaer and Crawfordsville that was not available prior to 2021. This led to a dramatic increase in referrals and consults, as well as improved access and patient satisfaction. Timely adoption of this solution enabled Franciscan to offer virtual health services during the COVID pandemic and support increased utilization of neurological services for COVID-related coagulation issues.

Franciscan's Stroke Coordinator also used the switch to Teladoc Health as an opportunity to streamline and elevate the health system's stroke response and care processes. Thanks to these efforts, Franciscan was able to achieve improved completion rates for patient education, improved dysphasia screening, improved time-to-glucose results, reduced time to neuroimaging and reduced door-to-needle time. Working to continually improve and optimize these processes has helped Franciscan improve their overall ability to treat patients experiencing a stroke and drive better patient outcomes.

When making a significant organizational shift, like adopting a telehealth solution, Franciscan recommends creating a clear and comprehensive change management strategy to guide implementation across all impacted groups and workflows. Taking this step can help ensure alignment and buy-in at all levels.

### With both neurologists approaching retirement, and a steady, significant decline in inpatient visits between 2016-2020, Franciscan sought a robust virtual solution that could help them:

 <p>Improve neurology coverage</p>	 <p>Increase overall visit volume</p>	 <p>Reduce transfers</p>
 <p>Increase patient satisfaction</p>	 <p>Convert in-person consults to virtual</p>	 <p>Reduce door-to-needle times and overall time to treatment</p>

## A proactive approach to improving the patient experience

Franciscan continues to emphasize education and collaboration in order to build trust with staff and patients alike. A crucial factor in the success of the teleneurology program is Franciscan's team of highly trained virtual liaisons. Experts at supporting virtual bedside visits, they communicate expectations to patients new to telemedicine, creating a comfortable environment and assist during the exam under the direction of the overseeing Adjacent physician.

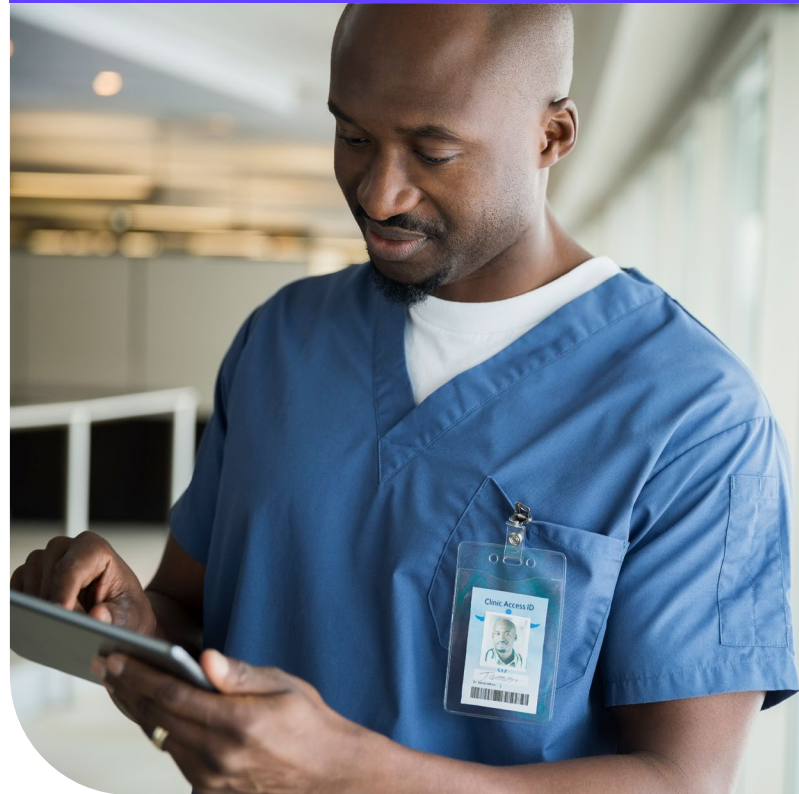
## Franciscan expands virtual care offerings

The successful implementation of the Teladoc Health teleneurology solution, and the resulting process and care outcome improvements led to a cultural shift toward virtual care at Franciscan, leading to quicker acceptance and adoption of virtual care services in other areas of care. Offering virtual positions enabled Franciscan to recruit physicians more effectively, and gaining access to a broad pool of national specialty experts empowered Franciscan to drive greater utilization of evidence-based practices. Franciscan also utilizes the data provided by Teladoc Health to help quickly identify, monitor and address issues to ensure the success of their virtual health program.

“

We were able to take the lessons we learned from the implementation of our teleneurology service and apply them to our virtual infectious disease, pulmonary, endocrine and behavioral health services. Virtual care has become a critical part of our day-to-day function.”

– Maria C. Vought, MS, BSN, RN-BC  
(Manager, Virtual Health, Franciscan Alliance)



[TeladocHealth.com](https://TeladocHealth.com) | [engage@teladochealth.com](mailto:engage@teladochealth.com)

1. Client reported data.

\* The testimonials and opinions presented are applicable to the client. Each client's exact results and experience will be unique and individual. The testimonials are voluntarily provided and are not paid.

**About Teladoc Health:** Teladoc Health is empowering all people everywhere to live healthier lives by transforming the healthcare experience. Recognized as the world leader in whole-person virtual care, Teladoc Health leverages clinical expertise, advanced technology and actionable data insights to meet the evolving needs of consumers and healthcare professionals.

PM020462.A | 11142023 © Teladoc Health, Inc. All rights

**Teladoc**<sup>®</sup>  
HEALTH