

## CASE STUDY

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Spectrum Health System Connects Patients and Loved Ones During COVID-19 With eVideon HELLO (Care Channel)

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## INTRODUCTION

Spectrum Health System is a not-for-profit, integrated health system headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Providing comprehensive medical services throughout Michigan across 14 hospitals and 150 ambulatory sites and telehealth offerings, Spectrum Health has been committed to improving the health and wellness of their communities for 24 years.

## ABOUT SPECTRUM HEALTH



## THE CHALLENGE

In 2020, COVID-19 disrupted all of healthcare. One of the most significant impacts was on the isolation requirements mandated for patients. This requirement not only had a profound impact on patients and their loved ones, but also the staff. Patients missed the support of having their loved ones with them during one of the most difficult and frightening times of their lives. Patients that were diagnosed with COVID were not able to have their family present, making it difficult to discern the values and wishes of the patient. These experiences were heartbreaking for both families and staff.

Spectrum Health knew they needed to find a solution to help keep isolated patients connected. They implemented a commercially available video chat solution, but were dismayed to learn that usage was much lower than anticipated, and that nursing staff were taking too much valuable time to troubleshoot connection issues and help patients navigate the confusing process of using the technology.

“The commercially available solution] was a very manual, labor-intensive process, especially on the user end. We had people who would have to walk family members and loved ones through the process of getting it on their phone and it took forever. We were only able to make connections with a small number of loved ones due to the amount of time it took.”

—Amanda Knuth, Manager of Quality, Safety,  
and Experience at Spectrum Health

Spectrum Health hypothesized that a **simpler solution** that didn't require account creation or software downloads **would increase usage, connect more patients to loved ones**, and **ease the emotional and physical burden on nursing staff**.

## THE SOLUTION

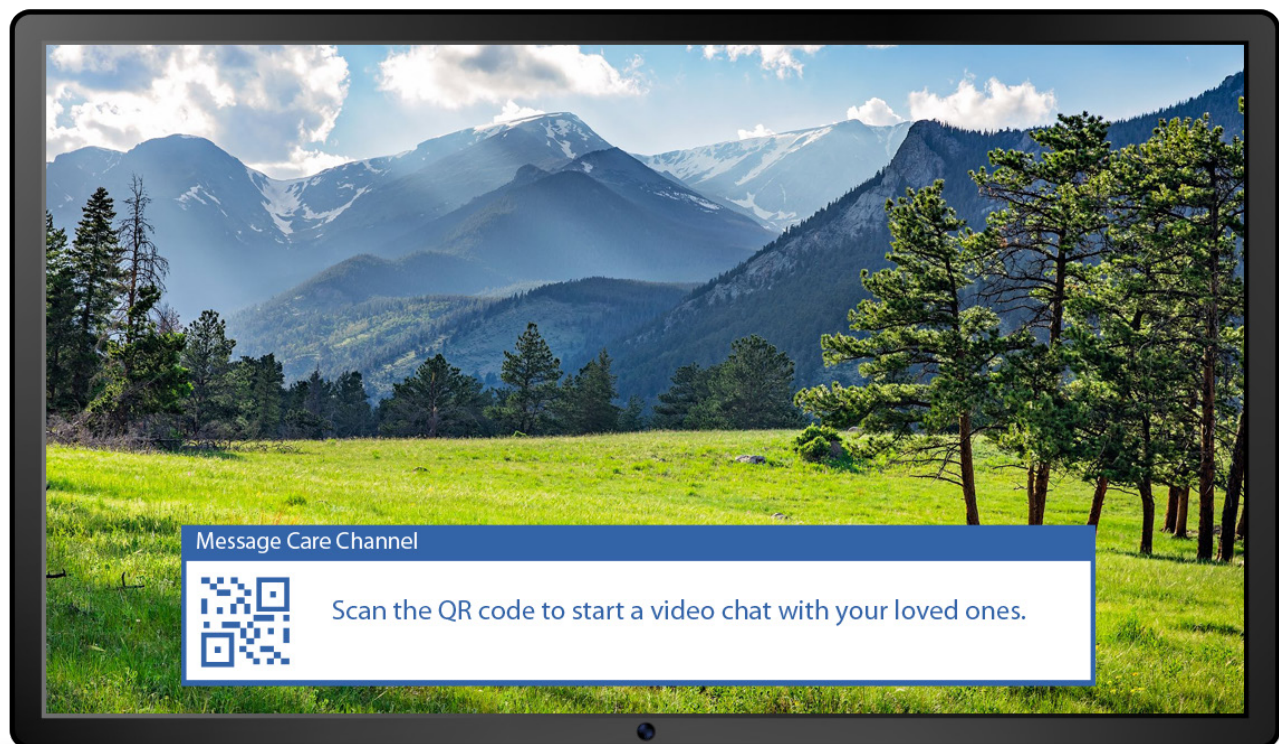
In December 2020, Spectrum Health contracted with eVideon to provide a fully cloud-based video visit platform designed specifically for healthcare. eVideon calls their video visit solution “HELLO” (Health, Engagement, Learning, Loved Ones)<sup>1</sup>. The solution required no downloads, logins, passwords, or account creation.

HELLO works on any mobile device, allowing patients to connect with their loved ones on their personal device or a borrowed hospital tablet. Spectrum Health invested in hundreds of iPads and expedited delivery to connect patients in several of their hospitals and rehab centers with their loved ones, while leaders and project team members came together to help the 31,000+ employees understand how to use the solution.



Working with eVideon, Spectrum Health was able to have all tablets online and working within two weeks of the project start date, allowing patients to finally connect in a meaningful way. In total, **more than 2,000 patient beds had access to HELLO.**

The implementation went smoothly. Staff received instructional materials and training remotely via video and online learning, and immediately began enjoying the ease of use that HELLO provided.



Spectrum Health does everything they can to encourage patients to use HELLO. In its Grand Rapids hospitals, patients' TVs prompt them to scan a QR code to visit with their loved ones.

## THE RESULTS

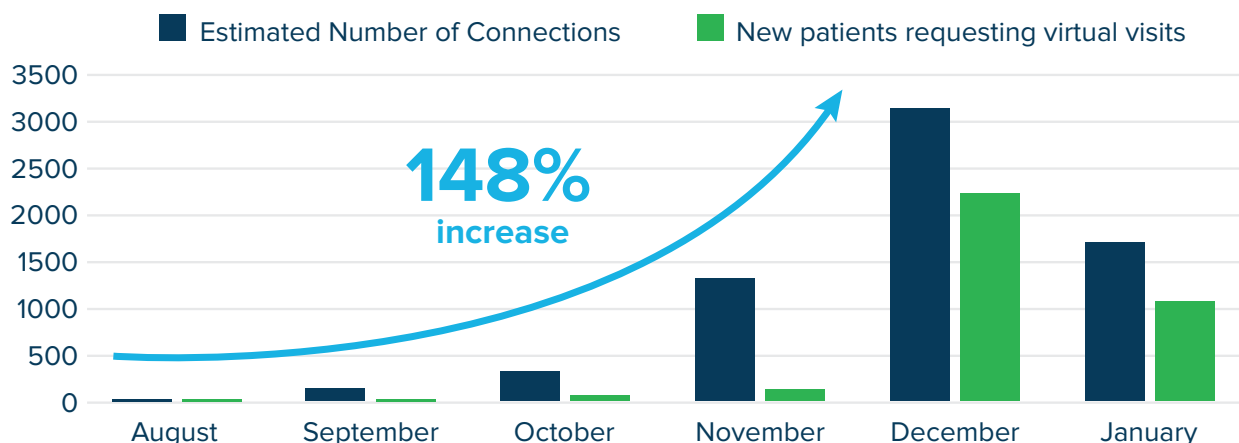
Since launching the solution in December 2020, patients have been connecting with loved ones nationwide and even worldwide. Working side by side with eVideon, Spectrum Health has made some tweaks to the platform to continue to optimize the experience.

“We know the team we are working with and can call them up about our questions or suggestions,” said Amanda Knuth, Manager, Quality, Safety and Experience at Spectrum Health. “Most recently, we worked to get open access in our patient rooms. Previously, if a patient was unable to press the ‘accept call’ button, a nurse would have to come into the room and manually press the button for them. This resulted in a lot of missed calls due to nurse availability and took nurses away from their medical duties. By allowing patients and their families to opt into open access, loved ones can call into the room whenever they want.” Nurses had to “garb up” in personal protective equipment (PPE) to enter patient rooms, so this feature not only saved a lot of time for nurses, but also a lot of PPE.

Knuth was delighted with the ease of implementing changes and features, such as open access to conserve PPE.

“It was wonderful to be able to say ‘hey we wanna change this’ or ‘hey can we do that’ and [eVideon] would just do it . . . that was refreshing.”

In only two months, Spectrum Health patients have completed 4,749 calls with loved ones, across more than 32 states and ten countries (including the US), a 148% increase over the estimated preceding four months on their previous video call platform. Over 3,250 unique patients had video visits with their loved ones in December and January alone.



In addition to allowing patients to connect virtually with their friends and family, the platform has helped staff and patients communicate, too, and has enhanced patient care throughout the ICU. “[HELLO] has really helped our patients connect with loved ones, but it’s also allowing our caregivers to connect directly with a patient’s family,” said Knuth.

“Beyond COVID-19, it’s really helped us to connect with people who aren’t physically closeby. Patients can connect with family and friends across the country. Making that connection to a loved one that they usually wouldn’t have during their hospital stay has made an otherwise difficult hospital stay a bit brighter.”

A customer support team member at Spectrum Health reflected on the importance of the platform for patients with COVID-19 in particular. “My former boss and family friend was hospitalized with COVID-19 a couple weeks ago,” they said. “His family is unable to visit due to current restrictions. When HELLO went live last week, they were among the first to use it. His family said that this was such a blessing. They were able to meet with him a couple of times before he was intubated, and still have meetings with him, even though he is now unconscious. He is now not expected to survive the week, but his

family is grateful for the opportunity to see him, even from afar.” Speaking about the impact that HELLO has had on Spectrum Health patient families, the team member said, “The hard work and push for [HELLO] has been making huge impacts on the lives of Spectrum Health patients and their families, even if we don’t hear about them all. This is a moment this family will never forget and I’m thankful to be a part of an organization that has so much compassion for their community.”



While the platform is mainly used to connect patients with their loved ones outside the hospital, Spectrum Health continues to find additional uses for the platform. Recently, a patient was transitioning from the cancer center to hospice and requested an iPad to make an important call back to the cancer center to say his goodbyes to the Spectrum Health team who had been taking care of him.

“I have worked on and off this morning with one of the floor nurses to connect a long-time cancer center patient to the cancer center staff today so that they could say goodbyes via a video visit, as the patient will be signing on with hospice today and going home to pass. The visit was very successful, and the patient and staff were all in tears with their chance to say goodbye.”

– Spectrum Health System care team member

In the future, Spectrum Health expects patients to continue to utilize the HELLO platform to have video calls with friends and family members who do not live close by or cannot visit in person. It's also become a great option for patients in isolation rooms who can't have any visitors to keep spirits high. Spectrum Health looks forward to integrating the platform throughout their hospitals to increase the patient experience and enhance the critical human connection side of patient care.

Knuth and the team at Spectrum Health are delighted to have accomplished what they set out to do. “The problem was that patients weren't allowed to have visitors and didn't have a good way to connect with loved ones, and this has definitely solved that problem.”

## HELLO BY THE NUMBERS



For more information on eVideon's video chat solution for healthcare, please click [here](#).