



## DIFFUSION IN ACTION:

# VIDEO BLOOD PRESSURE VISITS: TAKING THE PRESSURE OFF PATIENTS

### Challenge

Patients with abnormal blood pressure require routine blood-pressure monitoring, and at times, may require challenging or inconvenient travel for in-person clinical care. Consequently, patients may neglect their appointments altogether; and therefore not receive the necessary follow-up to assess ongoing lifestyle or medication interventions as a part of the long-term treatment plan. This may further exacerbate the patients' condition.

### Innovation

Dr. Margaret Carrico, Virtual Care Lead for Primary Care, and RN Cortney Frosch, Virtual Care Integration Lead for Primary Care, identified an opportunity to use VA Video Connect for these important visits, making follow-up accessible and engaging for patients. Video Blood Pressure (BP) Visits allow patients to replace the in-person follow-up visit with a virtual visit.

Video BP Visits eliminate concerns about unnecessary exposure to potential communicable infection(s); and save the patient the time and cost of travel, the stress of finding parking, the cost of childcare or time off work, and the copay for the visit.

Through the Diffusion of Excellence, RN Frosch and Dr. Carrico spread the innovation to the VA Boston Healthcare System and the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System. Video BP Visits can be implemented in as little as one month's time!



"Video Blood Pressure Visits are a great introduction to virtual care. Clinicians start to visualize all the potential uses for virtual care once they try a simple VA video BP visit and see how easy and effective video visits can be."

—Cortney Frosch, RN,  
January 2020

- **96%** of pilot patients would recommend Video BP Visits.
- **97%** of pilot patients were satisfied overall with Video BP Visits.
- **87%** of pilot patients prefer Video BP Visits to in-person follow-up in the clinic.
- **100%** of pilot clinicians were satisfied with using Video BP visits to manage hypertension.
- **100%** of pilot clinicians would recommend Video BP visits to other clinicians.

## How It Works

Patients in need of a blood pressure follow-up visit are issued a VA blood pressure cuff, and a VA Video Connect (VVC) visit is scheduled. Once scheduled, an email is sent to both the member of the clinical team and the patient with an online link to a secure Virtual Medical Room (VMR). The patient can access VVC through their personal computer, mobile device, or tablet!

During the visit, the patient uses the cuff to measure their blood pressure. The patient then shows the results to the clinician, holding the monitor screen directly in front of the camera. As with an in-person visit, the clinical team evaluates the need for any changes to the care plan and completes the documentation and the encounter as usual. It is that easy!

## Impact

More than 20 facilities across the VA have adopted Video Blood Pressure (BP), demonstrating that Video BP Visits are an achievable introduction to virtual clinical care. Video BP Visits have the ability to enhance care in a number of ways impactful to the Veteran, the clinical team, and the VA health system. Patients are less likely to skip their visits, improving adherence to care plans and providing an opportunity for critical follow-up or care plan modification. As a result, continuity of care is preserved and no-show rates for follow-up visits may improve, allowing for more effective utilization of clinical resources.

Video BP Visits provide an opportunity to expand VVC utilization for clinicians and patients – building the foundation for a robust telehealth program at your local facility.



“Say goodbye to the waiting room! Virtual visits are a valuable tool in connecting providers with patients; providing better access to health care services, which ultimately makes for a happier, healthier patients!”

—Roxanne Hutchinson, RN, January 2020

“Video visits have the potential to revolutionize healthcare by helping us provide the right care at the right time in a location convenient to the patient.”

—Kathy Craig, RN, February 2020

## At Your Facility

Before implementing the practice, visit the Telehealth webpage for VA employees:

<http://vaww.telehealth.va.gov/clinic/pri/tpcre/index.asp>

A national note title (VIDEO BLOOD PRESSURE VISIT) and template have been released for upload by Clinical Application Coordinators at all facilities. The install guide is available from the VA Software Document Library (VDL). <https://vaww.va.gov/reminders/>



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To learn more about Video Blood Pressure Visits, email [vavideobpv@va.gov](mailto:vavideobpv@va.gov)

Are you interested in learning how to submit your promising practice?

Visit the Diffusion of Excellence Marketplace <https://marketplace.va.gov>