



Long Island clinic partners with transport service on telehealth effort

Long Island Select Healthcare, a health clinic in Islip, and Midtown-based medical service and transport provider Ambulnz on Tuesday announced their partnership to roll out new telehealth initiatives.

The first program involves providing Covid-19 diagnostic or antibody testing to patients at home or in a group facility. Through it, a Long Island Select provider will be patched in either telephonically or virtually while Ambulnz staff are on-site with the patient to collect samples and deliver them to the lab.

The second involves flu vaccination, for which, similarly, a provider will be patched in while Ambulnz personnel are on-site to triage, deliver the shot and perform vital signs monitoring.

A third program will be rolled out next month, said Josephine Pizzurro-Coccaro, director of virtual care at Long Island Select Healthcare. When a patient with intellectual or developmental disabilities in a day program exhibits symptoms of Covid-19 or other illnesses requiring investigation, Ambulnz staff will be dispatched within 30 minutes to handle Covid-19 testing and blood work while being assisted remotely by a provider, she said. A patient can be transported home by Ambulnz too if necessary, she added.

Although the health clinic already had some telehealth capacity, it started conversations with Ambulnz in June about expanding its virtual services, said Dr. James Powell, CEO of Long Island Select Healthcare.



"The silver lining in this pandemic is it has forced us to consider access to health care in ways we've not anticipated, and now all options are on the table," Powell said.

"The pandemic has pushed us to put our telehealth programs on steroids, and the state legislations lifting telehealth limitations on federally qualified health centers allowed us to think outside the box," Pizzurro-Coccaro added.

Other programs are still in design with Ambulnz, including an urgent-care response service, she said.

The telehealth programs have no anticipated end dates, said Powell, declining to disclose the financial terms of the partnership.

Long Island Select Healthcare has about 7,000 patients from Nassau County to East End. Its 2019 budget was \$18 million, Powell said.

Ambulnz, founded in 2015, has a team of 1,500 EMTs and paramedics and has tested more than 500,000 individuals during the pandemic. The company filed to raise \$90 million in May 2019, and the company declined to disclose its revenue. —S.S.