

CASE STUDY

Array Behavioral Care Reaches More Underserved Communities Using BlueJeans Telehealth

More than 20 years ago, James R. Varrell, MD, saw an opportunity at a time when video conferencing required expensive investments in technology and most organizations were still using dial-up internet services. He recognized the problems people in underserved areas dealt with when accessing high-quality mental health care.

Due to insufficient community-based mental health resources and locally licensed clinicians, people living in underserved areas had limited access to timely, high-quality mental health care services. So in the Spring of 1999, Dr Varrell delivered the first telepsychiatry encounter and founded InSight Telepsychiatry, the nation's first telepsychiatry practice, near Philadelphia.

That first foray into telehealth proved successful as the team's telepsychiatry service offerings grew into new areas and states. Adoption continued to spread as broadband internet coverage increased across the country and as healthcare facilities realized the clinical, operational, and financial benefits of enabling patients to access remote psychiatrists via telehealth. In 2019, InSight merged with a similar practice, Regroup Telehealth, and the joint practice was named Array Behavioral Care.

Creating a Helpful Virtual Experience

Generally, when a patient enters a hospital emergency department (ED) in a mental health crisis, they have to wait for hours for evaluation or disposition. EDs are not designed or staffed to provide behavioral health patients the care that they need. What's more, many EDs do



Industry: Healthcare

Challenge: To grow and maintain its mission of providing mental health care for underserved communities, Array Behavioral Care needed to partner with a reliable, intuitive telehealth platform.

Solution: Array used BlueJeans Telehealth because of its unparalleled reach, security, and flexibility in meeting the needs of patients, clinicians, and healthcare facilities.

Results: In 2021, Array conducted more than 56,000 telepsychiatry sessions using the BlueJeans Telehealth platform.

As the use of telehealth services expanded rapidly in 2020 due to the pandemic and providers scrambled for solutions, Array confidently increased its sessions with BlueJeans Telehealth, thanks to reliable automatic scaling.

Array's implementation of BlueJeans Telehealth means that it can customize and scale its suite of telebehavioral health services for provider organizations of all shapes, sizes, and locations across the care continuum.

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– CARRIE DIGREGORIO, LEAD TECHNICAL TRAINING COORDINATOR, ARRAY BEHAVIORAL CARE

not have access to an on-call psychiatrist for psychiatric emergencies. This can cause a significant delay in care and treatment and lead to increased medical costs due to the extended length of stay.

For hospitals that partner with Array, the patient is first evaluated by onsite ED staff, who then contacts Array. Array connects the patient with a mental health specialist for assessment and treatment, if needed. The patient and the Array clinician then meet virtually via BlueJeans Telehealth to discuss the pertinent behavioral health issue and to determine next steps.

“It’s revolutionary for patients and facilities,” says Carrie DiGregorio, Lead Technical Training Coordinator at Array. “With Array, a person having an acute psychiatric emergency has access to the mental health care they need much more quickly. They are able to connect with a psychiatrist from Array who can evaluate them and consult with the onsite care team about further treatment or medications.”

When used in community health centers, primary care practices, or correctional facilities, patients can see the same clinician each visit, allowing them to build a strong and consistent relationship, which research has shown to

lead to higher patient satisfaction and better outcomes. Array also offers virtual psychiatry and therapy services to patients directly in their homes.

“Wherever people are in their mental health journey, Array has the services and clinical expertise to support them regardless of their care setting or acuity level,” says Michelle Mann, Array’s Senior Director of Marketing.

A Crucial Need for the Right Platform

Array would find it hard to serve patients without a video conferencing platform. The practice has relied on the best video conferencing technology available over the years and has tried several solutions. Some became obsolete and others worked well for some applications, but not others.

Array began using BlueJeans Telehealth soon after the platform was introduced. “As we’ve grown, we see how critical it is for our platform to be stable and easy to use, which is why we partner with BlueJeans Telehealth,” says DiGregorio.

Because care is delivered remotely, it’s critical that the platform is simple, reliable, and highly secure.

Array has team members available 24/7 to process requests for psychiatrists. They relay that information to the remote psychiatrist who is privileged in the relevant hospital and licensed to work in that specific state. “Generally, an onsite nurse or health tech sets up the computer at the patient’s bedside and initiates the virtual visit with the Array clinician,” says DiGregorio. “A securely generated meeting ID and passcode is created, and both the Array clinician and onsite nurse log in and the session begins.”

No one else can access or record the session, which is important to ensure security. “As a provider, we have to comply with HIPAA, which requires us to maintain high security around patient records,” adds DiGregorio.

The HIPAA or Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act is a law that’s designed to prevent protected health information from being disclosed without the patient’s consent.

A Platform That’s Also a Caring Solution

Array team members who work with BlueJeans Telehealth praise its intuitive interface, which is easy enough for those who are not tech-savvy to navigate. Clinicians also appreciate the way they can walk patients through conditions and medications using the screen share feature.

DiGregorio encourages clinicians to rate each BlueJeans Telehealth session based on the sound and picture quality, and the platform’s stability. “We like to see fours and fives. If we get a one or two, our IT department picks it up and reviews it to see what was going on and how to prevent it from happening again,” she says.

There’s also a regular monthly meeting between the Array IT and BlueJeans Telehealth teams to discuss any unsolved issues as well as updates and features that can help Array. “Those regular check-ins are very helpful and reflect the true partnership that we’ve built with BlueJeans Telehealth, rather than the usual customer-vendor relationship,” says DiGregorio.

Overall, BlueJeans Telehealth enables Array to provide virtual psychiatry and therapy services to patients with all the advantages of in-person healthcare.

“We’re committed to providing high-quality care and need a reliable, high-quality platform that allows us to deliver on that commitment,” adds DiGregorio. “The fact that BlueJeans Telehealth gives us that kind of support and flexibility is a sure sign that we’ve made the right choice.”

ABOUT ARRAY BEHAVIORAL CARE

Array Behavioral Care is the nation’s leading clinician-centric virtual psychiatry and therapy practice with a mission to transform access to quality and timely behavioral health care. Array offers telepsychiatry solutions and services across the continuum of care, from hospital to home, through its three flexible delivery models. For more than 20 years, Array has partnered with hundreds of hospitals and health systems, community health care organizations and payers of all sizes to expand access to care and improve outcomes for underserved individuals, facilities, and communities. As an industry pioneer and established thought leader, Array has helped shape the field, define the standard of care and advocate for improved telepsychiatry-friendly regulations.