



Success Story: PACE Southeast Michigan

PACE Southeast Michigan partners with GrandPad to achieve continuity of care during COVID-19 pandemic

Continuity of care is critical for older adults and patients with chronic or complex conditions. PACE Southeast Michigan used the GrandPad telehealth platform successfully to navigate COVID-19 access restrictions, enhancing the existing patient experience.



GrandPad breaks down typical barriers to technology use for seniors by providing a high-contrast screen and large buttons that make it easy to see, hear, and manage interactions. And because GrandPad comes with a built-in, secure 4G LTE cellular connection, patients do not need in-home internet to connect with a PACE caregiver.

Telehealth Supports a New Normal

Under ordinary circumstances, PACE Southeast Michigan serves 1,200 individuals with services at five clinic locations in the Detroit area, but the arrival of COVID-19 meant circumstances were anything but normal. Program participants, many of whom are medically frail seniors, were unable to visit PACE Southeast Michigan's centers in Dearborn, Eastpointe, Rivertown, Southfield, or Sterling Heights. PACE needed a way to provide care and conduct telehealth visits that would allow patients to continue to experience the highest quality of life, while avoiding risks associated with in-person visits.

The organization had dipped its toe in the telehealth waters a few years ago with a grant-supported project, and while that effort generated positive results, the device at the center of the experience supported only clinical interactions. As a result, many participants saw it as an obligation, and even some who recognized its benefits asked to return it. That's why, when COVID-19 hit, PACE Southeast Michigan knew they needed a device that patients would welcome into their lives and enjoy using.

Purpose-Built Technology Bridges the Digital Divide

PACE clinicians recognized the need for a device that would be easy for older patients and people with physical limitations to use, and equally important, one they would want to use. As a result, PACE Southeast Michigan partnered with GrandPad, the first purpose-built table for people over the age of 75, to support enhanced virtual care.

"Getting devices into participants' hands quickly was of paramount importance, because we wanted to ensure there was no interruption in care," said Roger Anderson, senior director of operational support and

GrandPad.biz

innovation for PACE Southeast Michigan. *“The combination of deployment, training, and customer support GrandPad offered exceeded our expectations and allowed us to ensure a smooth rollout.”*

To ensure a seamless launch, the GrandPads that PACE Southeast Michigan received were programmed to focus primarily on provider-to-participant video calling. Other features, including the ability to video chat with family members or administrators, were disabled. According to Anderson, once users were up and running, PACE Southeast Michigan leadership enabled more features.

An Emergency Lifeline

In one remarkable instance, Roger Anderson, PACE Southeast Michigan’s senior director of operational support and innovation, received a call at home on a Saturday from GrandPad customer support. A PACE participant had gone through their trusted circle of contacts available on their GrandPad looking for someone to help them call 911. When their personal contacts weren’t available, they landed on customer support, and the GrandPad representative located Anderson, who called an after-hours EMS provider. The customer service rep stayed on the call until help arrived. While the incident wasn’t life-threatening, Anderson said it easily could have been.

“That emergency call spoke volumes to me,” said Anderson. “It tells me GrandPad is not just a product and a help desk. That representative’s willingness to go the extra mile directly aligns with our organization’s priorities and values.”

Increased Engagement and Critical Support

The biggest concern during PACE Southeast Michigan’s initial rollout of 50 GrandPads was that participants would embrace them, and by that metric the effort was a huge success. PACE Southeast Michigan quickly ordered an additional 75 tablets to be delivered over the course of three weeks and now has GrandPads in all five of its locations. Participants, many of whom had never used a smartphone, have been able easily to conduct telehealth calls with their providers.

Early indicators are positive with the typical PACE Southeast Michigan participant registering about 2,000 “taps” (or interactions) on their GrandPad each week. However, some GrandPad superusers register as many as 40,000 “taps” a week. These interactions allow PACE clinicians to monitor a patient’s well-being, giving them the ability to reach out to patients who are inactive for a period of time, to ensure they aren’t experiencing issues.

Going Beyond Clinical Care with Social Connections

The ability for patients to connect socially is just as important to PACE Southeast Michigan as is the clinical connection. Currently, the 125 PACE participants using GrandPad have 155 friends and family they can easily and securely communicate with at any time through the device. For PACE, the social interaction serves as a gateway to clinical care because if patients like using the device, they are more likely to engage with clinicians for virtual appointments. These interactions also allow the PACE team to monitor a patient’s emotional health, to conduct physical therapy exercises, and have even allowed patients to participate in virtual Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. As a result, PACE is working on a solution to hold group rehab sessions.

As COVID-19 begins to wane and PACE Southeast Michigan begins to resume in-person services at its five centers, GrandPad will remain a central feature in their care model, with participants using the devices for check-ins between center visits, and to reach clinicians for emergency needs.

An Enthusiastic Partnership. A Bright Future.

“Our goal has always been to provide our senior community members with the personal care, medical treatment, and well-being support to live independently with a high quality of life,” said Anderson.

“GrandPad allowed us to achieve this goal and to expand our service offerings at a time when our country’s healthcare system is in crisis.

It was a win-win for our organization and our patients.”

According to Anderson, GrandPad has been an enthusiastic partner as PACE Southeast Michigan works to expand its telehealth capabilities.

“I’ve never encountered a hard no,” Anderson said. “I’ve encountered a ‘maybe not yet,’ or ‘we can work with this.’ I’ve always gotten a quick response and a willingness to work on whatever we need or request. This level of service and customization has been more than I could have hoped for with any device.”

According to Anderson, PACE Southeast Michigan employees have also been thrilled with the addition of GrandPad to their care routine. The tablets have allowed providers to continue offering a personal touch even when they can’t deliver in-person care at PACE Southeast Michigan centers.

GrandPad Telehealth Platform

