



DELIVERING CRITICAL TELEHEALTH SERVICES TO RURAL AMERICA

INDUSTRY

- Healthcare

BENEFITS

- Expanding the reach of medical services to rural communities
- Reducing travel costs and time for patients
- Improving safety and security for patients and staff
- Helping treat the most vulnerable suffering from opioid addiction

FEATURED PRODUCTS

- RealPresence Group Series – RealPresence Group 310, 500, and 700, the first standards-based video endpoint certified for Microsoft® Skype for Business
- RealPresence Group Convene – Delivering rich video and content experiences for small group and personal collaboration
- Polycom Advantage Services – Providing 24x7 support and access to technical experts, rich analytics, and more
- RealPresence Clariti – Simple, powerful, cloud-ready UC infrastructure software for businesses



BAPTIST HEALTH CORBIN USES FEDERAL GRANT MONEY TO BETTER SERVE THE CITIZENS OF KENTUCKY

Baptist Health is a family of hospitals, care centers, physician offices, and health facilities with headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. For nearly a century, the organization has focused its efforts on attracting top medical professionals with patient-focused services, modern facilities, and advanced technologies.

In recent years, the family of hospitals has grown, adding nine hospitals with more than 2,400 licensed beds. They also have 300 points of care that offer urgent care, express care, occupational medicine, physical therapy, and diagnostics. One such hospital is Baptist Health Corbin, located in eastern Kentucky. Baptist Health Corbin has 273 beds that provide acute and skilled care for a broad spectrum of healthcare services to residents of Whitley, Knox, Laurel, Bell, Clay, McCreary, Harlan, and Campbell counties, as well as Jellico, TN.

A particular challenge for Corbin residents is getting easy access to healthcare, due to treacherous roads and driving conditions, geographic distance, and lack of public transportation. For example, the township of Whitley City, located in the Daniel Boone National Forest, requires driving at the edge of steep drops on hairpin curves. The drive time to the nearest health services takes nearly an hour, but on days with bad weather, the road is virtually unpassable.

Over the past three years, the staff at Baptist Health Corbin has sought solutions to provide quality care to citizens who are located far away from their largest medical facilities. “We needed to expand our footprint to serve those needing behavioral health, primary and specialty care, and substance abuse treatment – particularly in the area of opioid abuse,” said Anthony Powers, President of Baptist Health Corbin.

The opioid epidemic has been deemed the worst public health crisis in American history, creating a toll on users, families, and communities nationwide. Rural Appalachia is at the epicenter of this crisis, exacerbated by the loss of coal jobs, increased poverty, and a lack of easy access to treatment. Baptist Health Corbin is addressing this crisis head-on with the recent successful deployment of telemedicine and behavioral health

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services, in partnership with Appalachian Children’s Home located in Barbourville, KY. The facility is a state-licensed treatment facility, an emergency shelter, and a foster care placement agency for children under the age of eighteen.

“The patients can get a consistency of schedule and care in a safe and secure environment without the need to travel. It’s a win for everyone involved,” said Cindy Nash, APRN at Baptist Health Corbin. “Before our telemedicine program was in place, these kids would miss nearly an entire day of school and activities just for a thirty-minute appointment.”

“Students report positive experiences with telemedicine, relating clinical visits are ‘way faster’ than going to an actual doctor’s office, sitting and waiting,” said Brandy M. Williamson, LCADC, CSS Medical Director of Appalachian Children’s Home.

“Furthermore, our therapist reports positive benefits, including having more hands-on involvement in the services provided and improved continuity of care.”

There has been a perfect storm with healthcare demands for behavioral health, the opioid epidemic, and a stressed infrastructure of providers. What’s clear is that telemedicine reduces costs and improves outcomes and satisfaction between patients and providers. However, new and innovative technology-based initiatives are not always immediately affordable, particularly when serving impoverished rural areas. Fortunately, there are grant programs available to fund these types of endeavors. Baptist Health Corbin collaborated with the Polycom Grants Assistance Program to identify multiple sources of grant funding.

“The Polycom Grant Assistance was invaluable to us as we developed grant projects, providing the support that contributed to over \$4.2 million in grant funding received over the past three years,” said Kristi Burnett, Telemedicine Network Liaison of Baptist Health Corbin. With an additional \$1 billion in funding recently approved in the Opioid Bill, Baptist Health Corbin will have the ability to continue to apply for and receive the grant funding needed to continue and expand its fight against opioid addiction.

Additionally, remote clinics required video conferencing that was simple to set up, easy to use, reliable, and interoperable with other products. And they needed systems that were economical and performed well under less-than-optimal broadband connections.

After careful consideration, Baptist Health Corbin chose to partner with Polycom to meet its ever-evolving needs. The healthcare provider selected the Polycom Group Convene consult station as an excellent solution for small clinics and schools, due to its design as an all-in-one device that could comfortably sit on a desk or mount to a wall in a small patient room. For hospitals and clinics, Baptist Health Corbin chose Polycom’s self-contained UtilityCart500, which is designed to integrate medical diagnostic tools and provide mobility throughout the facilities.

“Our services are primarily focused around behavioral health and primary care,” said Anthony Powers. “Approximately 20 percent of our total volume is currently serviced through telehealth. That is up significantly from just a year ago with less than 5 percent. I can foresee in the next five years that 70 to 80 percent of our behavioral health medicine and 50 percent of our primary care visits will happen via telemedicine.”

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