

# Appalachian Health

LIVING WELL WITH ARH

A Lifesaving  
Screening

Kids &  
Asthma

Telemedicine:  
Keeping Patients  
Healthier



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## THE BEST CARE CLOSE TO HOME

**At Appalachian Regional Healthcare, telemedicine technology is helping patients stay healthier with less travel.**

**To help make healthcare more accessible** to more patients, ARH is building cutting edge telemedicine programs. “Telemedicine is ideal for ARH and for our patients because the communities we serve are spread throughout the mountains of Appalachia and travel can be a challenge,” says Isaac Hallam, ARH’s director of corporate strategy. “Using telemedicine limits, and sometimes eliminates, travel for patients as well as providers.”

Last year, the Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center honored ARH with the Telehealth Excellence in Service for Rural and/or Medically Underserved Populations award for its Remote Patient Monitoring (see sidebar at right) and Chronic Care Management programs. This year, ARH continues its commitment to using the latest technology to improve patient health with the launch of a new telehealth service.

In early June, ARH will begin offering patients at the ARH Morgan County Clinic and ARH McDowell Clinic virtual access to specialists from ARH Cardiovascular & Thoracic Associates in Hazard.

“The telemedicine programs are part of an ongoing effort to make healthcare within our service area more convenient and more accessible,” says Hallam. “We envision it as a key component of how we deliver care moving forward.”

ARH’s new telemedicine program puts patients face-to-face—via a computer monitor—with a specialist at another location. That specialist may be an ARH doctor, or one working in partnership with ARH. The program gives patients access to the best medical resources without having to drive hours away from home.

Telemedicine visits are similar to a traditional visit with a doctor in an exam room and are billed as a face-to-face office visit. Clinic staff will show you to an exam room with telemedicine equipment, including a large computer monitor, and connect you to the doctor you are scheduled to see. Clinic staff may remain in the room to facilitate the visit or may leave the room but remain nearby to provide assistance if needed.

ARH will be rolling out the program to 14 clinic locations. The first phase of that rollout focuses on cardiac services, but other specialties will be offered and may include endocrinology, psychology and dermatology.

### Chronic Care: Keeping Patients Healthier

ARH’s award-winning Remote Monitoring Program helps patients with chronic conditions such as heart disease, congestive heart failure, COPD, hypertension and diabetes maintain their health and stay out of the hospital. Patients spend a few minutes every day using a set of simple digital tools—a blood pressure monitor and weight scale as well as a blood-glucose meter and pulse oximeter if needed. The tools are easy to use and intended to become part of a patient’s daily routine, says Isaac Hallam, ARH’s director of corporate strategy.

The readings taken by these tools are sent automatically via Bluetooth to a pod that transmits the data (through internet, cellular phone service or landline phone) to a nurse. If there are any abnormalities, the nurse calls the patient to discuss health, diet and medication. If needed, he or she also contacts the patient’s primary care provider. If patients forget to do a reading, the remote monitoring nurse gives them a reminder call, keeping them on track to stay healthy.

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ABOUT  
THE PROGRAM, TALK  
TO A MEMBER OF YOUR  
CARE TEAM OR GO TO  
[WWW.ARH.ORG](http://WWW.ARH.ORG).

