Essential Components of an Enterprise Telemedicine Platform

THE GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE LEADERS
### An Enterprise Telemedicine Platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimizing Outcomes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving Clinical Quality</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaling Telemedicine Programs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building in Flexibility</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovating</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating with Existing Technology</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**About SOC Telemed**                                           | 11   |
An enterprise telemedicine platform should assist health systems in achieving some of the strategic goals of their organizations. While a telemedicine solution should enable an organization to conduct virtual consults, it should go beyond the basics to empower health systems to optimize organizational and clinical outcomes.

Healthcare executives who have immersed themselves in telemedicine strategy know that success lies beyond some of the obvious components such as clinicians and audio/video capabilities. While carts, cameras, physicians, and EMR integration are important, critical success factors need to include analyzing existing workflows, cross-departmental buy-in, implementation, scalability and, most importantly, measurable outcomes. Focusing on operational tactics alone can lead to underperformance against expectations.

An enterprise telemedicine platform should offer a specific set of characteristics to ensure success for deploying, sustaining and growing a telemedicine program.
Initial telemedicine programs were defined as any sort of audio or video technology that facilitated connections between patients and off-site clinicians. Success was measured solely on the quality of connectivity. The requirements have changed dramatically and telemedicine now needs to influence clinical, operational and financial outcomes. Telemedicine platforms must contemplate a variety of choices in real time using business principles, hospital requirements, and advanced algorithms:

- Who are the available clinicians?
- Are they appropriate for the case?
- Does the clinician have privileges at that location?
- Does the hospital prioritize using staff before outsourced clinicians?
- Do these priorities change depending on the time of day?

An enterprise telemedicine platform goes beyond mere connectivity to influencing certain variables throughout an organization to improve clinical outcomes. It should also drive operational efficiencies and show a return on financial investment.

An enterprise telemedicine platform should optimize clinical, operational, and financial outcomes.
Hospitals or health systems that employ a telemedicine platform should be able to trust that the service and technology will enable the highest quality clinical performance.

For this, an enterprise telemedicine platform should be backed by proven workflows and telemedicine best practices that standardize care delivery encounter to encounter and across locations. The platform vendor should also be evaluated on their industry leadership and medical expertise. Proof points include Joint Commission Accreditation, a robust and documented clinical quality process, and clinical leadership with expertise in both specialty practice AND telemedicine.

Clinical quality is driven by data insights; an enterprise telemedicine platform should enable healthcare organizations to pursue evidence-based clinical protocols with robust reporting, analytics, and benchmarking.
Telemedicine is not a one size fits all model. An enterprise telemedicine platform should meet health systems where they are on their telemedicine journey and then mature with them over time without requiring operational changes and technology overhauls. Clinical use cases, physician staffing, and operational and financial priorities change over time. A telemedicine solution that is scalable means that both the vendor and the system must be dynamic enough to adjust with changes in strategy and still drive the outcomes needed.

A platform should support a growing program and take on new volumes and other challenges without being hamstrung by poor design or economics that are rendered obsolete by growth.

From the entire infrastructure to the technology used to manage operations and access to capable and credentialed clinicians, a genuinely scalable technology platform should promote (rather than hinder) the growth of a user’s telemedicine program. If a telemedicine platform is well designed and robustly supported, the addition of new locations, facilities, departments, specialties or clinicians should be seamless instead of a significant operational undertaking.

An enterprise telemedicine platform should let you easily add on new locations, facilities, departments, and clinicians.
A telemedicine platform should serve to facilitate, complement and enhance an organization’s existing program; not dictate its parameters. SOC believes that no two telemedicine programs are alike; hence, the technology should be flexible enough to support a hospital’s individual service lines and unique workflows.

For the technology to be flexible, its build should be seamless, enabling an organization to choose how they need and/or want to be organized. Should a hospital wish to request a consult by calling it in, the technology should support call-in consult requests. Perhaps they want EMR integration or to use any web-enabled device to request consults. A flexible system can provide these options, supporting customizable telemedicine programs specific to an organization’s needs.
An enterprise telemedicine platform should be backed by a partner who invests heavily in innovation to deliver continual improvements to its partners. A great partner shares these innovations with its customers at no additional cost instead of charging for every iteration. Obviously, a partner not willing to invest in advancements should be avoided completely.

When an organization chooses to implement a telemedicine program, there can be considerable investment in time, money and resources: staffing, technology, training and management. Staff may need to be hired, technology purchased, and time spent on training and management. So, what happens five years down the road when the technology is already outdated? Should the organization have to reinvest in updating these systems? Of course not.

To continue to propel telemedicine to the forefront of general medicine, it is the responsibility of technology providers to invest in the future of the industry at large. How? By continually providing next generation solutions—software and hardware—that empower medical providers to push beyond the limits of how telemedicine is used today.
While innovation is critical, focusing entirely on hardware in the telemedicine conversation is a mistake. With the rate of hardware obsolescence so high, a telemedicine platform tethered to a specific piece of hardware is a risky investment. A platform should provide hospitals the ability to deliver remote care the way they choose. A platform should offer users the freedom to conduct telemedicine using carts, monitors, tablets, smartphones or other stationary end points without pigeonholing them to a single hardware or brand.

While telemedicine is quickly advancing the way programs are evaluated and designed, many vendors are lagging behind. Healthcare decision makers need to educate themselves on the components discussed above. Organizations must reorient their consideration of telemedicine or risk losing out on the benefits: better clinical outcomes, increased patient access, and an improved bottom line.

**An enterprise telemedicine platform should run on all of your carts, monitors, tablets, and smartphones**
An enterprise telemedicine platform should:

- Allow control of your clinical, operational, and financial outcomes
- Elevate and standardize clinical performance across your system with aligned workflows
- Easily add on new locations, facilities, departments, and clinicians
- Customize the technology for your service lines and their unique workflows
- Consistently innovate and share the latest technology innovations with you at no cost
- Run on all of your carts, monitors, tablets, and smartphones

As you evaluate technology to support your telemedicine initiatives, make sure you’re considering a platform that works as hard as you and your team.
SOC Telemed (SOC) is the largest national provider of telemedicine technology and solutions to hospitals, health systems, post-acute providers, physician networks, and value-based care organizations. Built on proven and scalable infrastructure as an enterprise-wide solution, *SOC’s technology platform, Telemed IQ*, rapidly deploys and seamlessly optimizes telemedicine programs across the continuum of care. SOC provides a supportive and dedicated partner presence, virtually delivering patient care through teleNeurology, telePsychiatry and teleICU as well as enabling healthcare organizations to build sustainable telemedicine programs in any clinical specialty.

SOC enables organizations to enrich their care models and touch more lives by supplying healthcare teams with industry-leading solutions that drive improved clinical care, patient outcomes, and organizational health. The company was the first provider of acute clinical telemedicine services to earn The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval and has maintained that accreditation every year since inception. SOC Telemed is accredited by CHQI™ for Telemedicine. For more information, visit www.soctelemed.com.

If you are interested in learning more about the Telemed IQ telemedicine platform, contact us for a working session with your organization to discuss your telemedicine objectives and see how we can help.