

Greeley County Health Services: Enhancing Specialty Care Access with Telemedicine

The Need: Providing Consistent, High-Quality Specialty Care in a Frontier Community

Greeley County Health Services, located near the Colorado-Kansas border, is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital serving one of the most remote regions of Kansas. The hospital faced major challenges in offering specialty care, with patients having to travel three to five hours for appointments in endocrinology or rheumatology. The financial and logistical difficulties of recruiting full-time specialists to such a remote location left a gap in patient care.

“Patients were waiting months to be seen by specialists, and the only alternative was to refer them out of the community,” said Trice Watts, CEO at Greeley County Health Services. The hospital needed a flexible, sustainable way to provide specialty care to meet the needs of their rural patients.

The Challenge: Balancing Care Needs and Specialty Access

Introducing telemedicine as a new model of care within the pediatric population Greeley County faced two main challenges: the lack of patient volume to justify hiring full-time specialists and the geographic isolation that made traveling to larger facilities for care burdensome for patients. Relying on traditional telemedicine models posed scheduling issues, as appointments were often set at inconvenient times. Additionally, managing physician documentation and referrals from multiple systems made care coordination complex.

The Solution: Collaborating with Eagle Telemedicine for Consistent Care

Solving its care access needs is a unique Eagle Rural Care Alliance program which enables Greeley County to share telemedicine program hours with another rural hospital, Logan County Health Services. Using this model, Greeley County partnered with Eagle Telemedicine to bring specialty services to their hospital through a block time model.



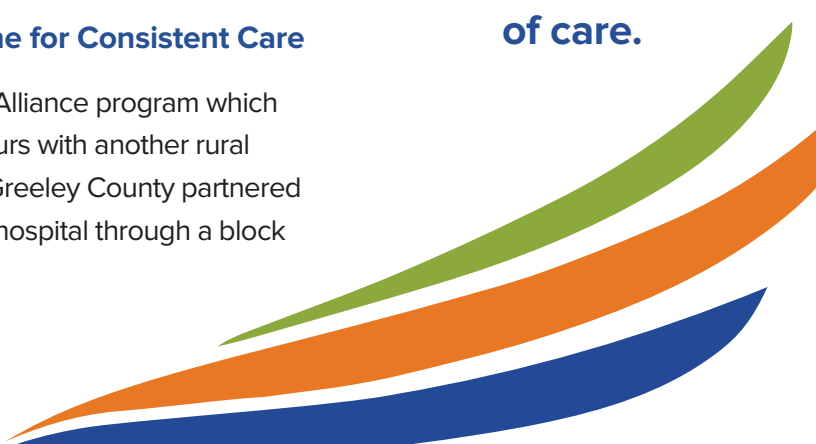
Saves patient travel time up to 10-12 hours per month.



Decreases wait times for specialty appointments from months to weeks



Strengthens hospital-provider relationships, ensuring **seamless coordination of care.**



“We’re paying for providers’ time, but we control the schedule. It has made a real difference in patient care,” Watts said. By bundling services with Logan County, the hospital shares specialist time in four-hour blocks to meet patient demand and ensure consistency.

By working with Eagle Telemedicine, Greeley County provided endocrinology and rheumatology care through a reliable telemedicine platform. This model has not only improved care access but also strengthened the relationship between the hospital and its community. “Patients are seen much faster now, and they get the services they need right here,” Watts added.

The Impact: Enhanced Community Trust and Faster Patient Access

The implementation of telemedicine services has significantly reduced wait times for patients, allowing them to get appointments in as little as two weeks rather than waiting two months. Additionally, telemedicine has strengthened relationships between the hospital’s staff and the local community as Greeley County delivered more than 100 specialty consults for Endocrinology and Rheumatology over the past year that they would not have otherwise been able to support.

“Patients are receiving better information, and their care is much more consistent,” Watts explained. Greeley County’s staff can now manage referrals, ensure follow-up appointments, and handle lab and imaging orders more efficiently, helping improve both patient satisfaction and care outcomes.

"We've reduced travel time and wait times significantly. Patients now get care right here in our community, which strengthens our connection with them."


— Trice Watts, CEO, Greeley County Health Services

The Result

Greeley County Health Services’ collaboration with Eagle Telemedicine has revolutionized specialty care delivery in their rural community, reducing travel and wait times, and strengthening the hospital’s role as a trusted healthcare provider.

Discover more about the Eagle Rural Care Alliance here:

<https://www.eagletelemedicine.com/eagle-rural-care-alliance>



Greeley County Health Services

Kansas

Greeley County Health Services is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located in a remote area near the Colorado-Kansas border. The hospital uses telemedicine to provide specialty care services to its rural population.

Use Case

Provide consistent endocrinology, rheumatology, and nephrology care locally.

Eagle Telemedicine Benefits

- Delivered more than 100 specialty consults that could not have otherwise been supported
- Balanced access to telemedicine specialties based on patient need
- Reduced patient travel time by up to 10-12 hours per month
- Increased consistency in specialty care access
- Improved coordination between local providers and telemedicine specialists