

Houston Facts

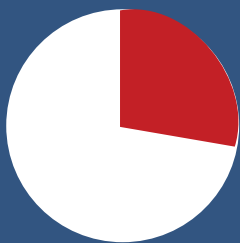


971

Licensed Home Health Care Providers in Houston, TX

\$13,800

Average Cost of Hospital Readmissions



27%

Preventable Hospital Readmissions

HOME HEALTH CASE STUDY

Accessible Home Health Care of Houston

SITUATION OVERVIEW

According to the Texas Health & Human Services Department, there are 971 licensed home health providers located within in the City of Houston, Texas. Additionally, there are 482 providers in the surrounding counties.¹

The competition for professional and local referrals of new clients is simply staggering.

To succeed in such a highly competitive market, home health agencies need every advantage they can get to survive and remain profitable.

Successful home healthcare agencies keep a sharp focus on key metrics like re-admission rates and customer service ratings.² Medicare re-admissions are costly to medical care providers and payors - averaging over \$13,800 nationwide.³

Multiple studies confirm that patient communication following discharge is the BEST way to avoid an unnecessary hospital readmission.⁴

CMS (Center for Medicare / Medicaid Services) has enacted the Hospital Readmission Reduction Program, which is a value-based care model that drives payment penalties when hospitals exceed the benchmark hospital readmission rate.

Worse, CMS readmission penalties were levied on over 2700 hospitals exceeding half a billion dollars in 2017.⁵ A recent University of California San Francisco (UCSF) study published in JAMA Internal Medicine reports that over one quarter (27%) of all 30-day hospital readmissions are preventable.⁶



ACCESSIBLE HOME HEALTH CARE - HOUSTON



**Joint
Commission
Gold Seal of
Approval**



**4.5 CMS
Customer
Satisfaction
Rating**

Accessible Home Health Care is an established and growing home health care agency serving the entire Houston metropolitan area. It employs approximately 30 clinicians in a variety of disciplines, including registered nurses, certified nurse aides, social workers, physical, occupational, and speech therapists.

A reputation for delivering results is as important as reducing cost when it comes to receiving referrals from healthcare providers. Chief Executive Officer Randy Paramore of Accessible Home Health Care Houston has worked hard to earn and maintain its Joint Commission Gold Seal of Approval⁷ and 4.5 CMS customer satisfaction rating in January 2018.⁸

“The metrics are driven by a deep dedication to providing the highest quality of care possible”



Randy Paramore, CEO

ADOPTING TELEHEALTH SOLUTIONS

Home health care providers agree that technology alone doesn't make patients healthier, but better technology enables providers to triage more services without having to visit the home for a change in status or a question.

In many cases, patient issues can be remotely addressed and responded to in a very cost-effective manner using telehealth technology.

Initiative Criteria



**Low Cost +
High ROI**



**Easy For
Patients**



**Improves
Workflow**



**Patient
Satisfaction**



**Family
Involvement**

EVALUATING NEW TELEHEALTH TECHNOLOGY

Paramore is a firm believer in using technology to help improve operational workflows and improve the patient's experience. Paramore methodically evaluates new products to ensure it meets the needs of his patients and staff.

When it came to the CareCaller™, Paramore was intrigued by its ease of use, one-touch wireless call button, the versatility of assigned agency and family contacts, and it does not rely on the use of a landline.

Accessible clients can wear the CareCaller™ at all times using the comfortable lanyard or clip it to clothes, walkers, purses, etc. It is ideal for clients who may not be ambulatory, or who have other mental or debilitating medical challenges.

The CareCaller™ also offers built-in fall alerts, GPS locator/tracker and geo-fencing which can be an invaluable feature for clients who have early Alzheimer's or dementia and wander. Paramore's staff can call into the device, allowing direct contact to patients without giving out nurse cell phone numbers.

Finally, Paramore was impressed with the affordability of CareCaller™, from an extremely low initial investment and minimal ongoing service cost.

The CareCaller™ met all of the clinical and technological needs for Paramore.

- ▶ Initial cost of implementation
- ▶ Ongoing or residual costs
- ▶ How the technology works
- ▶ How easily the technology can be deployed
- ▶ How well it helps his staff improve performance & patient satisfaction
- ▶ How client's families are involved in using the device

Paramore Wanted A Solution To Improve The Three Most Critical Metrics:



Improve communications between Accessible staff, clients, and their families.



Increase the agency's CMS Customer Satisfaction rating.



Reduce unnecessary hospital readmissions

CARECALLER PILOT PROGRAM GOALS

For Accessible Home Health Care's clients, Paramore knew he needed a tool that was affordable and easy to use with a patient population that includes geriatric, English as a second language (ESL), and those with a limited understanding of modern technology.

“The technology needs to improve operational challenges, reduce missed appointments, and most importantly, the technology needs to empower the agency to provide a higher quality of care for its patients by increasing patient engagement.”

- Randy Paramore, CEO

GOAL – BETTER COMMUNICATIONS & REDUCING MISSED APPOINTMENTS

No two patients are alike and often one client may require more than one type of service simultaneously; some patients need as many as five different types of specialists. The more complicated the case, the more challenging it can be to coordinate the patient's care. The more mature a client is in age, the less likely they have acquired advanced technology literacy.

“By far, the biggest operational challenge is communication and missed visits. Too often, clients wouldn't answer their phones when clinicians called to confirm appointments, even 15 minutes before the scheduled time.” says Paramore. This resulted in a significant number of missed appointments and missed appointments can have a significant impact on the patient's health. When the patient doesn't receive his or her treatment as prescribed, the risk of readmission is increased.



Self-Contained
CareCaller™
Nurse Alert



Reduce
Unnecessary
Readmissions

Paramore estimates the firm had previously wasted more than 300 personnel hours per year due to missed appointments caused by miscommunication among team members and patients. Not only did this take a toll on Accessible Home Health Care's costs of doing business, but it also frustrated staff and patients.

While the average CMS rating for agencies like Accessible Home Health Care is 3.0, Paramore wanted his team to deliver better than average quality care. A 20+ year veteran of the computer and technology industry, Paramore was eager to find technology to help them improve the company's performance.

“Initially, we tried it with our top tier of chronically ill clients and have expanded it to the second level of chronically ill clients. Recently we expanded it further with some of our non-medical clients.”

- Randy Paramore, CEO

GOAL – INCREASE PROVIDER REFERRALS BY REDUCING AVOIDABLE HOSPITAL RE-ADMISSIONS

A key metric of whether a home health agency is successful is a low re-admission rate for the most critical patients. When a patient returns home, it's common for the hospital or skilled nursing facility to contract a home health agency to provide extended medical care. This ensures the patient continues with treatments, takes medication properly, and is on the road to recovery.

The challenge for a home health agency is to assist patients in making a safe transition home and avoid events that cause unnecessary readmissions. To prove value as a partner in this process, home health agencies can utilize telehealth technology to support their readmission reduction strategies.



“ Referral resources want to work with business partners that will help them achieve the goals they’ve outlined for their patients. When they find a good business partner that is capable of reducing readmissions, not only does the patient benefit from quality of care, but the hospital benefits because they won’t have to pay the fines levied by CMS. That’s the only way to thrive in our competitive market. ”


- Randy Paramore, CEO

Paramore is still in a year-long process of analyzing the agency’s rehospitalization rate after using theCareCaller™ until the device is rolled out to all their patients and there are statistically significant results - but all signs point toward a positive and meaningful reduction.

GOAL – IMPROVING PUBLISHED CMS HOME HEALTH COMPARE STAR RATINGS

The CMS Home Health Compare metric measures the experience of patients receiving care from a home health care agency that is Medicare certified. The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey was implemented to ensure quality health care through accountability and public disclosures. In 2010, the survey became a requirement for the Medicare annual payment update.⁹

For Accessible - Houston, readmissions mean more than just a cost to the healthcare system. They have a direct impact on the company’s CMS ratings, which is 4.5 out of a possible 5.0.⁸ These ratings are visible on CMS’ Home Health Compare website, where consumers can look at star ratings for Medicare-certified home health agencies.



“ The new CareCaller™ device is one of many tools that we use. Of course, our communications inside our operation have improved from the front-line staff involved in patient care to the physicians, as well as communications with our clients, their families and caregivers. ”

- Randy Paramore, CEO

There is also a direct correlation between readmissions and top-line revenue for both the health care provider and their home health partners. Providers will be looking for home health agencies that can help their CMS ratings.

This year, under value-based purchasing models, satisfaction scores can determine a gain or loss of 3% in reimbursements in certain states. By 2022, the stakes will be even higher, as reimbursements tied to Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, or HCAHPS (pronounced H-caps) scores will vary by up to +/- 8%.⁸

RESULTS – EXAMPLE OF AN AVOIDED RE-ADMISSION

One prime example of improved communications happened when the agency received a phone call from the spouse of a patient at 2 a.m. on a Saturday. The wife was out of town until Sunday evening, but had received a text message alert saying “Help Me,” a pre-programmed text message from her husband’s CareCaller™ device. She was then able to briefly talk to her husband through the device.

The spouse immediately contacted Accessible Houston, who in turn notified the fire department and dispatched a certified nurse aide, both arriving at the patient’s house within minutes. After being cleared by the paramedics, the CNA remained with the patient until his spouse could return.

This is just one example where the CareCaller™ helped to facilitate communication between the patient and the Agency staff, avoiding a trip to the hospital.



RESULTS – STATISTICAL IMPROVEMENTS IN CMS RATINGS, PATIENT COMMUNICATIONS & PROVIDER REFERRALS

Accessible Home Health’s goal was to reduce missed visits, improve communication, and increase the CMS rating. The CareCaller™ delivered results, beyond Paramore’s expectations.

The CareCaller™ device now plays a major role in how his team members communicate with each other as well as with their patients. Accessible Home Health Care professionals can easily reach patients to confirm appointments, which is the biggest contributor to lowering missed visit rates. Certified Nurse Aids (CNA) visiting patients use the device to speak directly with their supervising RNs, without having the RN be present at the patient’s residence. The staff are able to communicate potential issues as indicated by changes in vitals or other indicators, often mitigating the potential for immediate re-admittance.

“ As telehealth technology continues to advance, even with this CareCaller™ device, our job in providing high quality care in the home will continue to advance with higher quality, lower cost, and more timely attention to health concerns before they escalate. This will facilitate home health care to continue to reduce the number of ER visits and hospital admissions and re-admissions. ”

- Randy Paramore, CEO

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

According to Paramore, six months after the implementation of the CareCaller™ pilot program, the number of missed visits plunged by 50 percent while their CMS rating increased 20% to 4.5 stars. This improvement put them in the top 5 percent of home health care agencies in Texas and the top 10 percent in the nation.” Additionally, readmission rates are significantly lower and patient satisfaction has improved dramatically.

With the pilot program successfully nearing its completion, CareCallers are now an integral part of the Accessible Home Health Care Program in Houston Texas.

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About Accessible Home Health Care - Houston

Accessible home Health Care – Houston Accessible Home Health Care of Houston provides high quality care to all age groups, in the comfort of their own homes. We provide medical and non-medical services through our staff of screened, highly qualified, and compassionate care team members which includes certified nurse aides, nurses, and therapists. As a full-service Home Health Agency, and as a Medicare Certified / Joint Commission Accredited provider, we are able to deliver levels of service that effectively match the changing needs and desires of our clients, patients and loved ones. For more information about our services, please visit our website at www.accessiblehouston.com or call the Accessible team at 281-859-3516.

About Homestead Health



Homestead Health is a telehealth solutions provider dedicated to Home Health Providers and Home Care Agencies. We develop innovative, cost-effective wireless technologies proven to provide superior patient/provider communications, virtually eliminate unnecessary 911 calls and ED visits and effectively reduce hospital admissions/readmissions. These benefits provide home health agencies with unmatched competitive advantages which translates into superior patient care and more provider referrals. For a free Care-Caller consultation and demo, please contact us at service@homestead-health.com or call 800-209-3220.



About Accessible Home Health Care - National Franchise

Accessible Home Health Care was founded in 2001 and is a growing multi-national home health care company with 104 home care/home health agencies operated from our corporate headquarters in Coral Springs, Florida. Accessible Home Health Care provides quality in home care to keep seniors safe and comfortable in the homes they love. We help families give their loved ones the ability to continue living independently in their own homes through customized in home care plans and resources like those found on “Accessible Online Academy” under ” Family Learning Center.” Our professional caregivers are experienced and fully trained to provide companion care, recovery care, respite and chronic care, especially for Alzheimer’s, Dementia, Parkinson’s, and Memory Loss. Our senior care services allow an individual well deserved in home safety and enhanced quality of life.