Tegria

Joe's Story

EHR Technology Enables Remote Care Success

Iliuliuk Family and Health Services

Welcome to Dutch Harbor, Alaska, which you may know because of the guys on "Deadliest Catch" and their pursuit of king crab in the Bering Sea. What you likely do not know is that Dutch Harbor houses one of the most remote uses of Epic software in the Aleutian Islands, which extend westward from the Alaska Peninsula toward the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia, about 825 miles from Anchorage, Alaska.

Iliuliuk Family and Health Services is a Connect site of Providence, using Epic via a satellite connection to care for the over 4,500 people that support the local fishing industries including Joe, a cannery worker who received a nasty cut while processing the day's catch. Soon after, Joe presented to Iliuliuk Family and Health Services with a fever, chills, redness to the wound, and low blood pressure.

Providers at Iliuliuk quickly identified Joe's condition was worsening—he was becoming septic, a condition with potentially very serious consequences. The nearest hospital was in Anchorage, which was hours away and required an air ambulance through dangerous and unpredictable airspace.

Illuliuk scheduled an ambulance flight for the same afternoon, but unfortunately, the weather conditions deteriorated quickly. There would be no transportation in or out of Dutch Harbor for several days.

In response, Iliuliuk and Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage created an integrated care team to monitor and treat Joe's condition from over 800 miles away. The care team in Anchorage was able to see real-time vitals, assessments, medications, and images in Epic and use that information to guide the local care team's action plan. Thanks in part to this collaboration, Joe recovered. After several days, he was stable enough to board a commercial flight to Anchorage and finish his treatment at Providence Alaska Medical Center.

Consider the alternative outcomes of this story: at best, Joe would have experienced disruptive and costly treatment far away from home. The most effective healthcare is often local. In the face of a difficult treatment situation, Joe's story is a terrific example of technology bringing care teams together in real time.

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