

Remote Patient Monitoring

Implementing RPM in Practices



Follow this step-by-step guide to understand the undertaking of implementing RPM into your practice, including what is required and expected from your practice. Some steps may need to be revisited or moved forward or last, depending on the practice operational structure.

1. Identify a need / Establish a Patient Base

Every practice has its own priorities that are specific to their patient base and organizational structure. When determining if there is a need for RPM, seek feedback from your staff and patients on identifying gaps in the patient's continuum of care and opportunities that exists in your organization. Seeking feedback from patients can be in the form of survey responses over patient experience/satisfaction that can guide you and your staff to determine those areas of opportunity. During this process, identify what kind of medical conditions physicians want to manage using RPM.

Once the need is determined, envision the expected outcome and if RPM is the best digital health solution capable of delivering the desired outcome. This step will bring purpose and essential information (i.e., long-term stability of service) to this new venture and help formulate the buy-in aspect of key stakeholders involved in the digital health solution implementation.

2. Form the team.

It is helpful to identify who needs to be involved and when throughout this project process and implementation. This includes individuals who will be mostly impacted by the new technology – including staff and patients. Consider organizing key players into teams: Core (project management team), leadership (key stakeholders), advisory (staff and patients), and implementation team (administration and management staff). When forming a team, carefully consider only individuals necessary in moving this new venture forward and avoid adding too many individuals. Once the team is set up, carefully outline the responsibilities, and time commitment moving forward.

3. Evaluate the Vendor

Choosing the right vendor will depend on the functionality that provides your practice the ability to facilitate RPM as intended. First, reach out to vendors with high-quality recommendations and reviews, along with the intent of a long-term partnership. Consider seeking recommendations from AMA's Physician Innovation Network, where they can connect you with one of 900+ companies based on your needs.

When meeting with vendors, provide a [vendor intake form](#) to obtain pertinent vendor information and build a Request for Proposal (RFP) that outlines your practice's goals in utilizing RPM and send to vendors that most closely align to your goals. Additional items to ask a vendor include, case studies and referrals, scheduling live demos, and performing vendor evaluations using AMA's [evaluation vendors form](#), and make the decision on a vendor with your core and advisory team prior to pitching the top vendors to your leadership team.

Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) Checklist for Choosing a Vendor

- How long have they been doing this?
- How many patients do they have on RPM?
- What do you want to measure?

- Do they offer devices and monitoring?
- Are there warranties on devices?
- Are they HIPAA compliant?
- Do they offer help with patient device issues and offer customer service?
- Does the platform allow for tracking time spent monitoring?
- Can you run a report on patients who have 20 or more minutes tracked that can be billed?
- Does the platform interface with your practice management system or do you have to manually enter charges each month?
- Are the terms of the agreement specified?
- Do they provide reference checks for other clients?

Additional Questions to Consider When Choosing a Vendor

- How will patients get the device?
- Will there be Vendor training/educational guidance over device set-up and usage?
- What will happen if the device breaks or has problems?
- How will information from the device be sent to the clinician and where will it be stored?
- What do patients need to receive RPM services?

Top RPM Companies

As providers increasingly turn to RPM technology to improve patient outcomes, limit costs, and cut down on using more expensive services, healthcare industry newcomers and legacy players alike are vying for a piece of this growing market.

- Dexcom
- Honeywell Life Sciences
- Medtronic
- Philips Healthcare
- ResMed
- Senseonics

4. Contract with RPM Vendor

Click on [Implementing Telemedicine in your Practice](#) for more information over contract language, policy and procedures, and vendors resources.

Aspects to consider when contracting include:

- Secure stakeholder approval for RPM implementation
- Negotiate terms of the contract
- Determine if document is clear and measurable for initiative deliverables
- Determine if Business Associate Agreements are needed. Evaluate all parties, including any vendors involved in the provision of services, for compliance with federal and state privacy and confidentiality regulations.
- Identify the timeline of current contract and outline when terms will be renegotiated
- Work with practice legal, financial, procurement, or IT team as necessary

5. Design Practice Workflow

There are various players that will be involved in delivering RPM services to your patients. These key players will include the patient, clinical staff, billing staff, physician, and vendor. In addition, there are two main aspects to consider prior to designing the workflow: integration of RPM device with your current EHR, and updated

responsibilities and additional staffing involved with this process. It is recommended to begin with a pilot of one provider who can commit in refining the best practice for the rest of the practice.

Consider the following steps when designing operational workflow:

- Develop a comprehensive set of protocols that describe how patients should operate remote patient monitoring devices, who on your staff will review the RPM device alerts, incoming data, when, and how often, and who dictates follow-up action
- Develop monitoring guide for staff (i.e., length of monitoring. Discharge process, and de-installation and refurbishment of RPM devices)
- Incorporate references to telemedicine/remote monitoring technologies into your Notice of Privacy Practices
- Include telemedicine equipment in your Security Management Plan and annual Security Risk Assessment and ensure all staff and providers who participate in telemedicine/remote monitoring services have received telemedicine-specific privacy and security training
- EHR Integration with RPM device
- Define clinical roles and patient/staff education

6. Prepare the Care Team

Create a realistic training environment for care team members to successfully operate devices, access data entry platform (EHR), responding effectively and efficiently to incoming data, respond to patients' questions, troubleshooting technical issues, and knowing who to turn to for further assistance.

- Talk with RPM vendor about available training material for staff and patients on device setup and usage
- Recruit staff leaders in developing tailored training material (i.e., scripts, guides, reference documents, videos) and becoming ongoing trainers
- Schedule large and small training depending on staff roles and ongoing refresher trainings
- Educate all staff on the new workflow, once developed, clinical protocols, and operation of RPM solution
- Train staff on how to educate patients on RPM device setup, usage, and health monitoring thresholds
- Provide a process/opportunity for staff to provide ongoing feedback or ideas for improvement

7. Partner with the patient

Upon determining how RPM will be provided in your practice and which patients are eligible, prepare for go-live with your first set of patients by determining what the patients' need for a successful participation of the program.

- Develop and finalize patient training/education material in various formats and communication channels to support different learning styles (i.e., use cases, what ifs, technical support, clinical staff contact information)
- Finalize eligibility criteria for RPM program participation and identify who is most likely to succeed for pilot
- Setup a plan to introduce eligible patient to the program at a follow-up appointment (i.e., phone call, email, or direct mailer) and how to enroll interested patients to the program
- Ensure the practice is prepared to initiate RPM workflow prior to distributing and activating monitoring devices to enrolled patients

Education Material:

- Educate patients on “available hours” and the limitations of remote monitoring.
- Educate patients on what constitutes an emergency reading, and how to respond (i.e. call 911, go to the emergency department, etc.)
- Educate patients on the risks of a remote device failing or malfunctioning, and the risks of malware compromising the effectiveness of the device and patient privacy.
- Document this education in the patient’s medical record, either via written acknowledgment or documentation of discussion. A written acknowledgment should reference patient education regarding how remote monitoring works, the limitations, and warnings.

8. Implement RPM pilot

Upon completing the previous setup steps, you will prepare to implement your initial RPM pilot into your practice.

- Obtain baseline numbers for success metrics to compare against for future success measurements
- Launch RPM pilot program with eligible patients
- Remind RPM support team for any technical or data connections issues for patient during onboarding
- Schedule follow-ups with patients (as needed) to discuss any issues over the device or data transmission and their role in the RPM program
- Ensure patient is being monitored appropriately as intended in the workflow
- Be proactive in responding to patient incoming patient data and adjust their care plan as needed
- Gather staff and patient feedback over workflow (as needed)
- Track key success metrics (as needed)

9. Scale RPM

Choosing to scale your RPM pilot means your pilot resulted in a success in various metrics your practice determined to be important and a priority. To scale, an organization must also have the financial backing and staff to expand the RPM program among the practice.

Below are steps to consider when deciding to scale within the practice:

- Address any issues or improvement opportunities in the RPM pilot
- Share the success of the RPM pilot program across the practice for moral
- Determine how you want to scale the RPM program in your practice (i.e., additional conditions, departments, physicians, patients, etc.)
- Setup a meeting with RPM device/monitoring platform vendor for next phase
- Retain and recruit RPM program staff for next phase
- Engage and train new patients
- Continue tracking key success metrics (as needed)