

April 17: COVID-19 Clinical Update

Patient Monitoring Program

This daily communication is intended to facilitate the sharing of important clinical information during the COVID-19 healthcare crisis and to help respond to questions from physicians across Northwestern Medicine.

In today's issue, you will find a Q&A with Chief of Internal Medicine Jeffrey Linder, MD, MPH, about the ambulatory Patient Monitoring Program.

AMBULATORY PATIENT MONITORING PROGRAM

The COVID-19 Patient Monitoring Program provides daily check-ins with patients across NM who tested positive for COVID-19. The program also includes patients who have a clinical syndrome consistent with COVID-19 based on symptoms

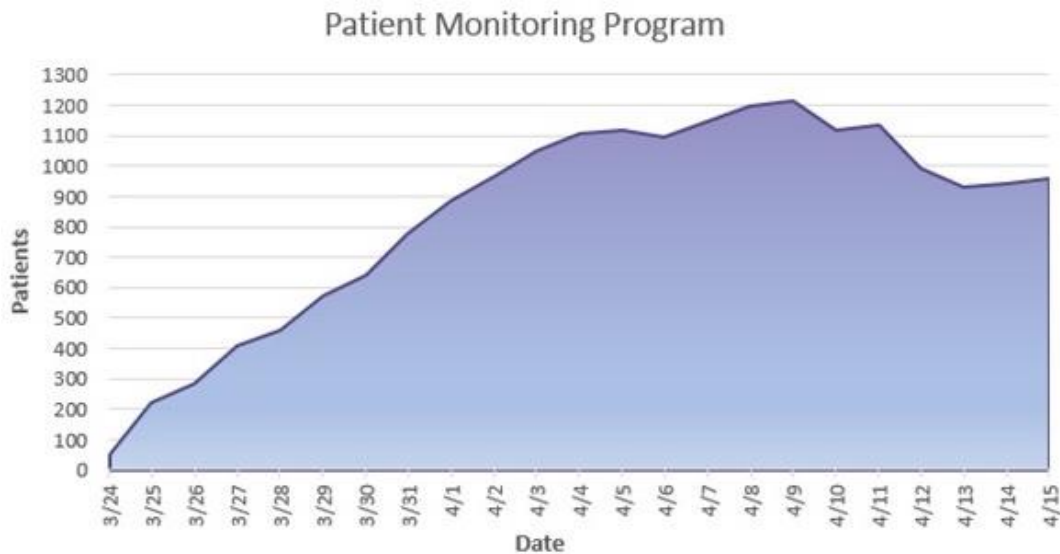
What is the goal of the Patient Monitoring Program?

Since more than 80% of patients with COVID-19 do not require hospitalization, we developed an efficient process to monitor patients at home and, if necessary, triage them to the appropriate level of care. The goal is to provide safe, remote support and avoid unnecessary trips to the clinic or ED.

How did the program come together and who is involved?

The program started quickly and has been an amazing collaboration among clinical, educational and health system leadership and IT, and I'd like to give special recognition to Gayle Kricke, PhD, MSW, who provided project management expertise.

We had our first meeting on March 21 and went live on March 24 with about 50 patients. Within eight days, we were following about 1,000 patients per day, as shown in the graph below.



We started the program with fourth-year medical students and attending physicians. Within 10 days, we had 193 nurses, 70 APPs, 152 medical students and 115 attendings working the equivalent of 500 staff hours per day in four-, eight- or 12-hour shifts.

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How are patients enrolled?

To enroll patients, send a message to the **COVID-19 Nurse Triage Pool** with the .covidmonitor smart phrase. Independent physicians should fill out the [Private Provider COVID-19 Patient Monitoring Request Form](#).

What do patients do when they are in the Monitoring Program?

Patients receive a daily NM MyChart message to complete a questionnaire about symptoms and concerns. Patients with mild symptoms are advised to continue to self-isolate. A nurse, APP or medical student will call patients who do not complete the questionnaire or who report concerning symptoms for additional evaluation. Patients with severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath, confusion, signs of hypoxia, or persistent chest pain or pressure are referred to the ED (about five to 10 patients per day), or 911 is called. We have many stories of patients who have expressed gratitude for the care they have received through this program.

What is the recommended home treatment for COVID-19?

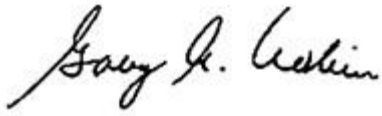
There are no therapies that have been proven to be safe and effective for COVID-19; therefore, we recommend taking acetaminophen for fevers and pains, other cold and flu remedies, rest and fluids.

How long do patients stay in the program?

Patients remain in the program until their symptoms subside or if they do not respond for three days. In Epic, a **COVID Monitoring Program** flag indicates if a patient is in the program.

Find additional information in [COVID-19 Patient Monitoring FAQs](#) on [Physician Forum](#).

Thank you to all Northwestern Medicine healthcare providers on the front lines of this crisis. To honor and celebrate your extraordinary work and courage during the COVID-19 crisis, we have launched the ***Heroes for Better*** campaign. If you would like to share the story of an NM hero, or if you have any questions, please submit them to covid-19md@nm.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary A. Noskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Noskin" clearly legible.

Gary A. Noskin, MD
Senior Vice President, Quality
Northwestern Memorial HealthCare
Chief Medical Officer
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