

## SECURE SIMPLE TELEHEALTH VIDEO CONFERENCING

## Bustling Pediatrics Practice Leverages Telemedicine to Modernize, Providing Parents with Convenience and Better Access to Care



*Operating a busy, private pediatrics practice in Randolph, New Jersey for nearly 30 years, Julio Guerra, MD, FAAP, knows that word of mouth can make or break a medical practice, especially when it's amplified via social media. A positive review is dependent on being available to patients when they need care, often when it is convenient to their schedules.*

Providing convenient access to care can be challenging. It's not uncommon for Dr. Guerra's team at College Plaza Pediatrics, which includes two other pediatricians and three nurse practitioners, to care for 70 to 100 patients per day, ranging from preterm infants to young adults. To accommodate patient needs, the practice relies on V2MD by MediSprout, a HIPAA-compliant video conferencing technology for telemedicine visits.

"We are in the business of care, and like any business, our aim is to provide the best possible service to our customers," said Dr. Guerra. "Telemedicine allows us to care for all of our patients, and enables us to provide the convenience their modern lives demand. I can make a parent's day when I offer them a televisit from home, rather than asking them to take a day off from work, travel to my office with a sick child, and sit in a germ-y waiting room while they wait for a potentially inconvenient office visit."

Dr. Guerra implemented MediSprout into his practice in 2019, and finds the solution easy to use. His team posts their televisit availability – which is often staggered between in-office visits, during after-hours, or assigned to one of the practice's physicians who is scheduled for televisits – and uses the system to send appointment reminders to both patients and providers. Patients easily connect from their smartphone or personal computer.

## Telemedicine Conveniently Addresses Pediatric Needs, Including Specialized Care

Dr. Guerra's practice treats all pediatric needs and also specializes in caring for patients with ADHD and mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. Offering televisits to address common concerns, such as a case of conjunctivitis, discussing an ongoing treatment plan, or fielding questions from a first-time parent or a teen struggling with anxiety at college, enables Dr. Guerra to control his schedule and leave room for more complicated concerns that require in-person appointments.

"Imagine the relief of a new mother when she can log in to an evening televisit to address her concerns about breastfeeding or formula choices, and receive guidance and comfort from a doctor who knows her and her child," said Dr. Guerra. "Televisits will never replace all in-office visits, but they are a valuable tool to bridge the time between appointments and address immediate concerns."

Prior to offering patients televisits, Dr. Guerra often received 30 to 40 voicemails and emails from parents with questions he needed to answer during unbillable time. He can now eliminate frustrating call-backs and phone tag with patients and provide more convenient access for his patients by converting those calls and emails into reimbursable televisits. V2MD's split screen features allows him to view patients while adding notes to an EHR. The screen can be shared with patients, for instance allowing him to provide test results or sharing forms completed by doctors and teachers to help inform an ADHD diagnosis.

*"We are more cost efficient and can see more patients than we ever could – even meeting with parents when their child gets sick while they are traveling out of town – without additional staff or overhead,"*

said Dr. Guerra

## MediSprout V2MD Provides Continuity of Care

Dr. Guerra experimented with other telehealth services prior to choosing MediSprout's V2MD. He found that telehealth services that leverage doctors who are unknown to their patients, much like walk-in and urgent care clinics that parents may resort to when their child's pediatrician is unavailable, often lead to over-prescribing of antibiotics and lack one of the most important, fundamental aspects of quality healthcare – the doctor/patient relationship.

"MediSprout is unique in that it enables patients to get convenient care from their own doctor," said Dr. Guerra. "While other alternatives also provide immediate care, the care is provided by a doctor who is unfamiliar with the patient and his unique medical history. Those visits often result in unnecessary prescriptions, and may lack necessary follow up, disrupting the continuity of care that is so important to quality healthcare."

## The Next Chapter

V2MD televisits have enabled College Plaza Pediatrics to evolve to meet modern demands. They have also allowed Dr. Guerra and his wife, a pediatrician in the practice, to enter the next chapter in their careers. In January, the couple announced their semi-retirement. While their practice continues to operate in New Jersey, they now meet with patients via televisits from their home in Florida.

"We're not ready to retire," said Dr. Guerra. "By modernizing the practice with MediSprout, we're able to continue seeing patients remotely. No one is rushed or forced to travel to appointments. We can easily meet from the comfort of our homes."

Practitioners in the New Jersey office plan to extend availability to patients by offering on-demand televisit options, as well as after-hours televisits.

"We are in the business of care, and telemedicine allows us to be successful by helping us provide quality care to our own patients, when they need us," said Dr. Guerra.