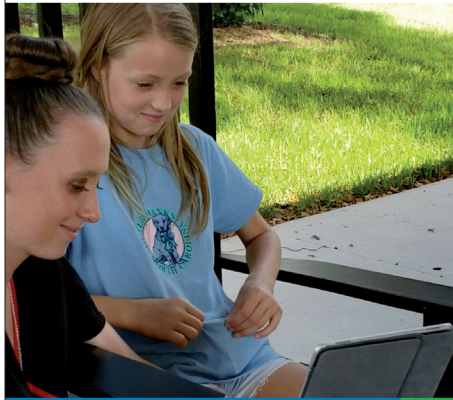
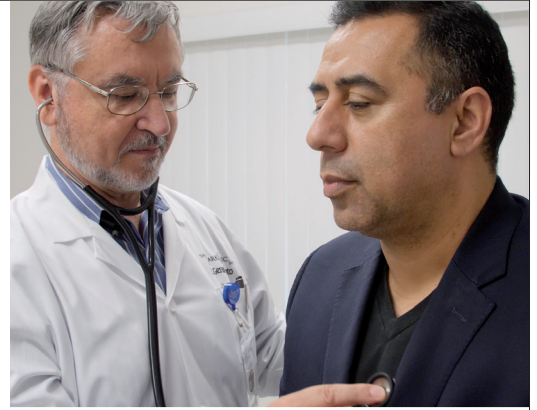
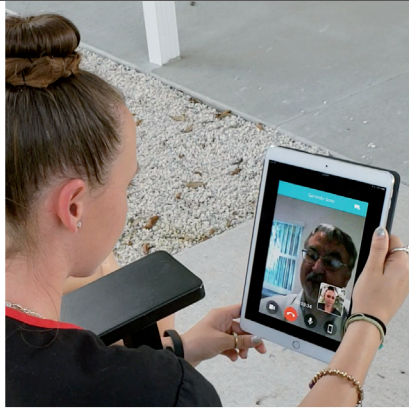


eClinicalWorks CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



The Clark Clinic

Telemedicine in Rural Florida

The Challenge

In 1986, Dr. Lowell F. Clark left chilly Minnesota for the warmth of Florida, where he founded The Clark Clinic and has dedicated himself to meeting the needs of rural and underserved residents. He recognizes that one key to providing quality care is taking advantage of emerging technologies, including telemedicine.

The Solution

After evaluating many providers, leadership and staff at The Clark Clinic concluded that eClinicalWorks — their healthcare IT partner since 2012 — offered a telemedicine solution that best met their needs. A “Tech It Up” campaign of implementation and training on healow TeleVisits followed.

The Results

The Clark Clinic uses healow Open Access® for appointment booking, Messenger campaigns for Patient Engagement, and healow TeleVisits. Care is available at clinics in Bushnell, Mascotte, and Howey-in-the-Hills — as well as at skilled nursing centers. The result has been improved access, workflows, and outcomes.

The Clark Clinic

Telemedicine in Rural Florida



Lowell F. Clark, MD

Opportunities and Challenges in Rural Medicine

In 1986, Dr. Lowell F. Clark left chilly Minnesota for the warmth of Florida and founded The Clark Clinic. In the years since, he has built a successful practice

by tending to the healthcare needs of underserved residents in rural communities in Central Florida.

“A high percentage of our patients are on Medicaid,” Dr. Clark said. “We take all insurances, because this thing where you come to us and then change insurance and have to lose your doctor seemed a little unfriendly, to say the least! Our patients still can have the same doctor and come to the same clinics.”

Dr. Clark and his staff recognize that rural medicine comes with unique challenges.

“When we looked into telemedicine, we thought that this would be great for a rural community, because they can’t always get to our clinic.”

— Betsy Clark, Chief Financial Officer

“The problem for us in a rural area is that we may want to do something but we don’t have the ability to do it, the bandwidth,” said Betsy Clark, chief financial officer.

“When we looked into telemedicine, we thought that this would be great for a rural community because they can’t always get to our clinic.”

Dr. Gerardo Soto, a native of Puerto Rico and one of the clinic’s two dozen providers, underscores

that point: “These people need preventive health. They’re underserved. And we serve them.”

Choosing eClinicalWorks and healow TeleVisits

“Amber Folk, our CEO, made it a team approach,” Betsy Clark said. “Every single person in our clinic is involved. We made sure that everybody understands telemedicine, including the download, the healow app, and everything else that you have to do to be a part of it.”

“We chose eClinicalWorks because they were looking to the future,” Folk said. “It really was a step beyond what we had seen in some of the other programs.”

“We tried another telemedicine firm before eClinicalWorks, and that was a disaster,” Dr. Clark said. “It took 15 seconds for the voice to come through. You couldn’t really have a conversation on it. It really wasn’t much good.”

Integration With the EHR Matters

“It really does make a difference when it’s integrated into your Electronic Health Record system,” Folk said. “Our staff were already familiar with eClinicalWorks, so we were able to move forward.”

Typically, a patient at a long-term care facility will need an advanced care planning visit, or a follow-up visit for medication changes, or perhaps the family has a question about those medications. Provided a given consultation can be done remotely, the patient is put on the telehealth schedule.

“Our doctor may not be in the facility that day, and so that would allow us to do a telehealth visit, and our provider would then see them,” Betsy Clark

“We chose eClinicalWorks because they were looking to the future. It really was a step beyond what we had seen in some of the other programs.”

— Amber Folk, CEO

explained. “The doctor can still provide the same care. We have access to all the same information in eClinicalWorks.”

Time to “Tech It Up!”

The effectiveness of TeleVisits depends, of course, upon awareness and confidence in using it.

“We’ve done everything for campaigns. We wear healow stickers. We have campaign posters in our lobby,” Betsy Clark said.

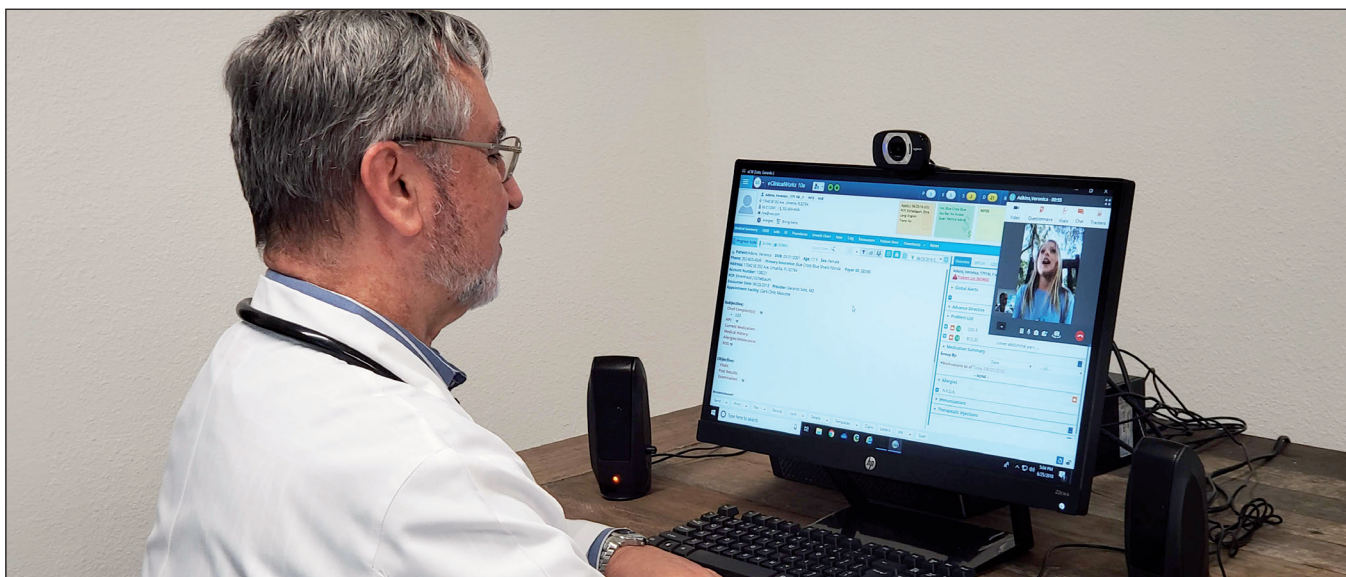
“In 2018, we did ‘Tech It Up at The Clark Clinic,’” Folk added. “Every patient that walked in the door, or that engaged with our providers or with our staff, they knew that we were ‘teching it up.’ We had bags for them, information, and packets, and we encouraged them to download the healow app right there during the visit.”

“We have utilized ‘We are wherever you are’ as a message to our patients,” Folk continued. “We don’t turn anyone away. Whether they’re at the skilled nursing facility, or they’re on a trip somewhere, or they’re on a business trip or a road trip, and they still want to see the doctor that they’ve become familiar with at The Clark Clinic — they can now engage with that provider through telehealth.”

Almost Like Being There

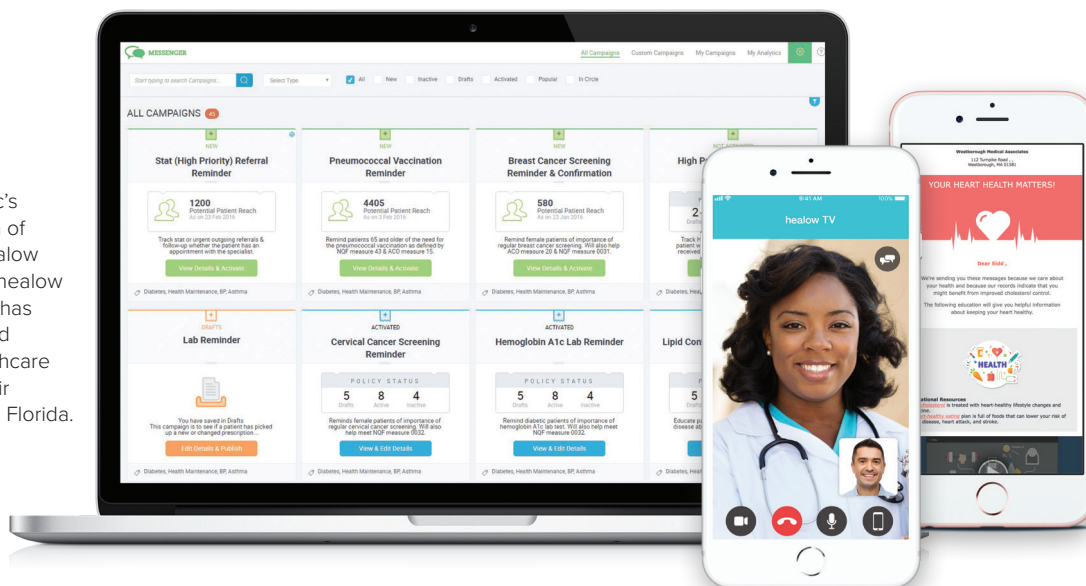
“It was very simple,” said Carol, a patient who recently had a TeleVisit. “I was surprised that it could be done, but when I grew up, the doctor still came to visit the home when you were sick. So, this is wonderful. It’s an asset for those of us who cannot get around that easily. It’s face to face, you can ask the doctor any questions you want, and he can clear them up.”

Dr. Soto notes that in most cases he can still make accurate judgments of the factors that matter most, including the patient’s speech, breathing, motions, and mood. The essential nature of the encounter is the same — face to face and private — and TeleVisits connections are clear and secure enough that neither the provider nor the patient really notices much difference.



Dr. Gerardo Soto conducts a televisit with a young patient. Dr. Soto notes that in most cases he can still make accurate judgments of the factors that matter most, including the patient’s speech, breathing, motions, and mood. The essential nature of the encounter is the same — face to face and private — and TeleVisits connections are clear and secure enough that neither provider nor patient really notices much difference.

The Clark Clinic's implementation of Messenger, healow TeleVisits, and healow Open Access® has meant improved access to healthcare for many of their patients in rural Florida.



"I can do all that through a computer. That's basically it," Dr. Soto said.

"I like the way it works with the system," said Patty Adkins, a telehealth coordinator for The Clark Clinic. "I like the fact that they can download the app onto their phone or they can download it onto their tablets. The older population love it."

Results That Matter

While The Clark Clinic's telemedicine experience is still in its early stages, there's little doubt it will prove successful.

"We just enrolled in healow Open Access®, and we are very excited about it," Betsy Clark said. "We were all watching the screen to see who was going to sign up for an appointment online. We've also used the no-show campaign, and we've sent out messages for the annual visits, or compliance visits, where they need to have their A1c's or their follow-ups for the flu virus."

Thanks in part to those Patient Engagement tools and more timely care, The Clark Clinic has reduced hospital readmissions and has improved advanced care planning and monitoring for high-risk patients.

The 'Remote' Future of Healthcare

Another unforeseen benefit of telemedicine has been as a marketing tool for the administrators of the skilled nursing and assisted living facilities where some of The Clark Clinic's patients live.

"They can show the families and the loved ones who live in other states that they have this option of telemedicine," Betsy Clark said. "We're looking into doing a three-way kind of conversation — with a family member at home, and a person in the nursing home, and our provider. That should make a huge difference in patient satisfaction and family satisfaction."

"One of the things that we've realized along the way is that it takes more than just a provider and a staff member and myself to get excited about the product," Folk said. "It really took our entire team getting involved and getting comfortable with TeleVisits before we really saw it take off and be a success."

"The future of healthcare is people want to be able to get to it easily, and not have to go sit for hours in a doctor's office," Dr. Clark said. "With some visits, you might almost have to do that to get a good physical exam, but most things you could get just by being able to talk to them and dig out what in heaven's name is wrong with them. So, in the future, I think most visits are going to be done by telehealth." ■