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**McLaren Northern Michigan Expands Virtual Capabilities to Enhance Care for Patients in Respiratory Isolation**

McLaren Northern Michigan began implementing a virtual nurse platform in select inpatient units in 2018. The platform is based on Banyan Medical Systems technology and provides video interactions between hospital patients and nurses. At the time, McLaren Northern Michigan was one of the only hospitals in the country to offer virtual nursing services. Now the organization has expanded the technology to enhance care for patients in respiratory isolation, including COVID-19 patients.

“Using Banyan’s audio and video technology, members of the care team can virtually round on patients, answer questions, and respond to patient needs without needing to enter the room,” said Jennifer Woods, MSN, Chief Nursing Officer at McLaren Northern Michigan. “This was originally intended to offer additional support for the bedside nurse, but during the COVID pandemic it has added an extra layer of protection for our patients, medical staff, and employees.”

McLaren Northern Michigan is leveraging virtual care technology to enable medical staff and nurses to virtually evaluate and treat COVID-19 patients. While not originally intended as an infection control measure it has proven invaluable to minimize the risk of transmission while allowing our caregivers to deliver high-quality care. The Virtual Care Technology does not replace hands-on clinical care. It is an additional tool that helps reduce exposure for providers and staff, preserves supplies, and provides frequent interaction and comfort to patients.

In March 2020, McLaren expanded the virtual platform into an additional 30 rooms to help prepare for the coming surge of patients with COVID-19, McLaren Northern Michigan now has 117 patient rooms equipped with virtual care capabilities that will help protect our patients and caregivers.

“The workstation allows me remote access to nearly every room in the hospital,” said David Corteville, MD, Cardiologist at McLaren Northern Michigan. “I can complete my entire consult, aside from the physical exam, and update COVID-19 patients on testing without needing to enter the room. The amount of masks and gowns saved is amazing.”

McLaren Northern Michigan initiated the virtual care platform to be at the forefront of nursing care. The hospital is fortunate to have this technology available in a pandemic that helps protect our caregivers in ways that other hospitals are not able to offer. McLaren Northern Michigan expects widespread adoption of this technology in the future not just because it helps provide better patient care, but because it allows for better protection of doctors and nurses.

### **About McLaren Northern Michigan**

McLaren Northern Michigan, a subsidiary of McLaren Health Care, is a 202-bed, regional referral center located in Petoskey, serving residents in 22 counties across northern lower Michigan and the eastern part of the Upper Peninsula. Over 230 physicians represent nearly all medical and surgical specialties, enabling full-service care with an emphasis on heart, cancer, orthopedics, and neurosciences services. For additional information, visit [mclaren.org/northern](http://mclaren.org/northern).

### **About Banyan Medical Systems**

Banyan Medical Systems is a next generation care delivery services and technology company focused on improving patient outcomes and lowering the cost of healthcare for hospitals nationwide. Banyan currently enables over one-third of the nation's healthcare systems with technology that integrates systems across the enterprise, combined with high-fidelity two-way communication that harmoniously joins local hospital staff with virtual medical professionals to provide the best patient care, at the point of need, wherever it is required; thus driving up efficiency and improving patient health and satisfaction.