THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING

HealthWatch
by EverHealth

Healthcare costs are on the rise.

It's no secret healthcare costs are on the rise. According to U.S. government data[1], healthcare spending grew 4.6 percent in 2019, climbing to a whopping $3.8 trillion. To put that figure in perspective, the U.S. collectively spent $74.1 billion on healthcare in 1970.[2]

One of the main drivers of this massive increase in healthcare spending is the rise in costs associated with hospitalization. In fact, one recent report[3] from the Department of Health and Human Services found that hospital costs accounted for nearly one-third of all healthcare expenditures.

To combat these rising costs, medical practices across all specialties — including nephrologists, urologists, internists, and primary care physicians — have accelerated their digital transformation journeys by investing in technology designed to enable them to deliver better care, increase operational efficiency,and keep as many patients out of the hospital as possible by improving health outcomes.

One such investment is in a cutting-edge healthcare technology known as remote patient monitoring, or RPM. Keep reading this e-book to learn all you need to know about RPM:

· **What is remote patient monitoring?**

· **What's the current state of the RPM market?**

· **What are some common RPM use cases?**

· **What are the key benefits of deploying RPM technology at your practice?**

· **How does RPM fit into your practice's digital transformation journey?**

· **What should you look for in an RPM provider?**

· **How can HealthWatch RPM help your practice make the most of remote patient monitoring?**

[1] www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/NationalHealthExpendData/NationalHealthAccountsHistorical
[2] www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/u-s-spending-healthcare-changed-time/#item-usspendingovertime_2
[3] www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb261-Most-Expensive-Hospital-Conditions-2017.jsp

What Is Remote Patient Monitoring?

Remote patient monitoring[1] is technology that enables doctors, physicians, and healthcare professionals to monitor clients' biometric data remotely using a combination of software and wearable devices. This enables healthcare providers to keep up to date on real-time patient health information.

For example, physicians can use RPM solutions to monitor patients' blood glucose levels and ensure their diabetes is properly managed and controlled. Similarly, doctors can use blood pressure monitors to keep tabs on patients' blood pressure and heart rate. When vital signs aren't where they should be, healthcare providers can intervene immediately.

Juxtapose that with how it used to be — and still is at many practices. Patients schedule appointments at whatever interval is necessary — weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, what have you. Once they leave the office, they're more or less left to their own devices until their next scheduled appointment. Even if patients have devices like activity trackers at home, patients rarely bring their home readings in, so physicians lack insight into this data.

Suppose a patient is healthy when they see their doctor, but their condition starts to rapidly deteriorate a few days later. In traditional healthcare settings, physicians might not detect such a lapse for weeks or even longer. Unfortunately, this delaying care often exacerbates health conditions, increasing the strain on precious healthcare resources.

Good news: By investing in RPM technology, healthcare professionals can create real-time connections to patient's vital signs. As a result, they're able to quickly address any anomalies as they emerge, thereby reducing the chances of hospitalization and improving health outcomes across the patient population.

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[1] https://healthwatchccm.com/solutions/remote-patient-monitoring/

Managing an RPM System

No two RPM solutions are exactly the same. Though some healthcare organizations can manage their RPM solutions in-house, vendors like HealthWatch offer RPM technology along with an administrative team that acts as an extension of your practice.

For example, a large hospital system with a massive IT team might decide that they'd rather take care of management internally. Most smaller practices, however, likely lack the IT resources needed to tinker with yet another mission-critical solution.

Unless you're planning on doing everything yourself, it's important to partner with a vendor that can see the process through from implementation and onboarding for patients and staff to ongoing monitoring and administration. That way, you're able to take advantage of purpose-built chronic care management solutions[1] specifically designed for RPM technology — increasing patient satisfaction and driving more revenue along the way.

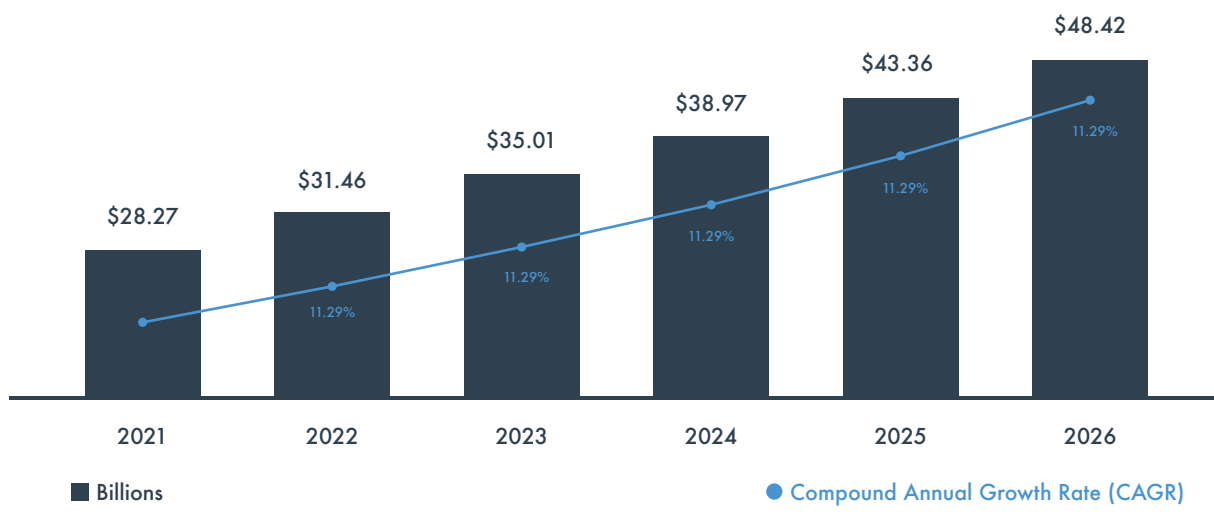[1] https://isalushealthcare.com/products/chronic-care-management/
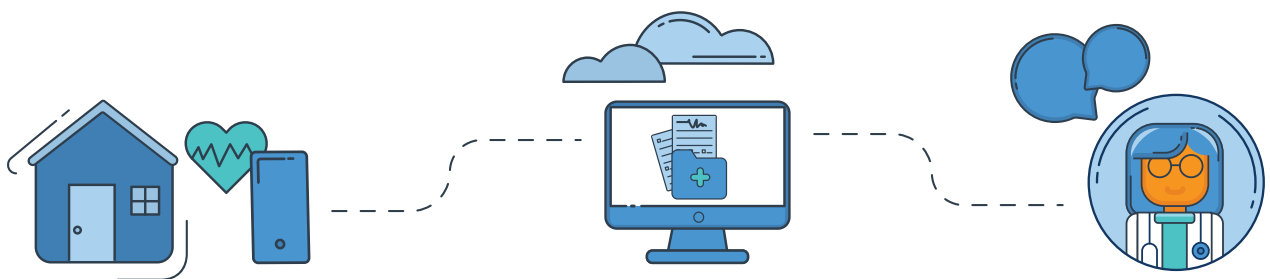
The State of the RPM Market

Because of the benefits that RPM solutions provide — chief among them better patient outcomes and the ability to save the U.S. healthcare system up to $6 billion each year[1] — it comes as no surprise that the market for remote patient monitoring solutions is accelerating at a considerable pace.

To illustrate, one recent report[2] predicted that the global market for RPM services will reach $28.27 billion in 2021, growing at a clip of 11.29 percent each year through 2026, when the market will haul in $48.42 billion.

Chart showing RPM market projections:
- 2021: $28.27 — 11.29%
- 2022: $31.46 — 11.29%
- 2023: $35.01 — 11.29%
- 2024: $38.97 — 11.29%
- 2025: $43.36 — 11.29%
- 2026: $48.42 — 11.29%

■ Billions ● Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

This makes perfect sense: As more and more medical practices become familiar with the transformative benefits leading RPM solutions deliver — and the variety of use cases for them — adoption will continue to increase. This is doubly true in an age where patients increasingly expect personalized healthcare experiences.[3]

Currently, one out of every 10 patients is using RPM technology. Looking ahead, eight out of 10 physicians expect they will use RPM in the future, according to a report from Accenture.[4] What's more, physicians expect RPM usage will double over the next five years, and 87 percent of physicians agree the technology will play a "key part" in healthcare delivery moving forward.

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[1] www.thefiscaltimes.com/Columns/2017/03/03/Medical-Technology-Could-Save-US-Billions-Each-Year
[2] www.yahoo.com/entertainment/remote-patient-monitoring-market-research-115000681.html
[3] www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200218005006/en/75-of-U.S.-Consumers-Wish-Their-Healthcare-Experiences-Were-More-Personalized-Red point-Global-Survey-Reveals
[4] www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/life-sciences/remote-patient-monitoring-realizing-potential

Common RPM Use Cases

How exactly are some of today's forward-thinking healthcare practitioners using RPM technology to deliver transformative patient experiences? Let's take a look.

1. Blood Glucose Monitoring

When persons with diabetes have blood glucose levels that are either exceedingly high or dangerously low, they can be affected by any number of complications, ranging from blurred vision, drowsiness, comas, and even death.

Using RPM technology, doctors can continuously monitor glucose levels — in some cases without even requiring patients to draw any blood. This, in turn, can increase patient engagement in monitoring their own condition, which studies show can improve health outcomes in patients.[1]

2. Hypertension Management

Nearly half of U.S. adults have hypertension[2], according to the CDC. This makes hypertension an ideal candidate for remote patient monitoring.

In addition to improving health outcomes, RPM can help the healthcare system rein in hypertension spending, which is projected to grow[3] from $70 billion in 2015 to $150 billion in 2035. By staying on top of blood pressure readings in real time, doctors can reduce the chances patients endure expensive hospital stays or develop serious conditions, such as heart disease and strokes.

[1] www.pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30372366/

[2] www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm#:~:text=Nearly%20half%20of%20adults%20in,are%20taking%20medication%20for%20hypertension.&text=Only%20about%201%20in%204,have%20their%20condition%20under%20control.

[3] www.heart.org/-/media/files/about-us/policy-research/policy-positions/clinical-care/remote-patient-monitoring-guidance-2019.pdf

3. Medication Management

Taking medications as directed can have a profound impact on health outcomes. Unfortunately, not everyone is an expert in taking their medicine regularly. A recent item[1] in the New York Times, for example, found that as many as 50 percent of patients don't take their medications as prescribed.

4. Nephrology

More and more nephrologists are turning to RPM to offer patients the convenience of home dialysis.[2] Using remote patient monitoring tools, practitioners can track patients' vitals and progress over time while improving dialysis compliance and keeping patients connected to their healthcare. As an added bonus, patients don't have to travel to and from the doctor's office regularly, which is a huge relief for patients — particularly those with end-stage kidney disease.

By now, you have a better understanding of what remote patient monitoring is, why the segment is growing in the market, and how, specifically, nephrologists, urologists, internists, and primary care physicians are using RPM solutions. In the next section, we'll take a look at the direct benefits these leading-edge practitioners are experiencing due to their investments.

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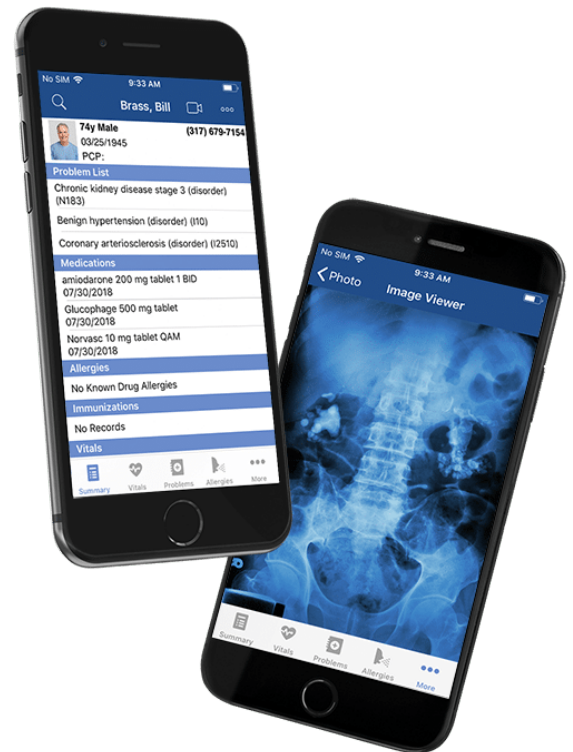
[1] www.nytimes.com/2017/04/17/well/the-cost-of-not-taking-your-medicine.html#:~:text=%E2%80%9CStudies%20have%20consistently%20shown%20 n that,in%20Annals%20of%20Internal%20Medicine.

[2] https://isalushealthcare.com/blog/use-cases-for-telehealth-in-nephrology-care-in-2019/

What Are the Key Benefits of Remote Patient Monitoring?

There are several reasons why more and more healthcare practices are turning to remote patient monitoring technology. Here are some of the most persuasive ones.

Better Health Outcomes

All healthcare providers are focused on the same thing: doing everything they can to help patients live longer, healthier lives. RPM solutions can give medical providers the tools they need to accomplish this mission.

Bottom line? By investing in RPM technology, specialists, and primary care physicians can improve the overall health of the patients they serve, enhancing their quality of life while lessening the strain on healthcare resources.

Value-Based Care

In an effort to lower healthcare costs, improve health outcomes, enhance the patient experience and improve staff satisfaction (i.e., the "Quadruple Aim"[1]), more and more healthcare providers are transitioning from fee-for-services models to value-based care models. This is yet another area where remote patient monitoring can shine.

Using RPM, doctors and specialists can rapidly scan patient data and proactively reach out to folks who need immediate attention, which eliminates the chances they will "waste their time" on a patient who is doing well.

What's more, RPM also enables practices to maintain social distancing while continuing access to care — something that is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic and helps practices achieve the mission of the Quadruple Aim.

Stronger Patient Experiences

In today's digital age, the customer experience is rapidly becoming a key differentiator[2] among brands. It's not enough for a product or service to be good; customers are more concerned about an awesome end-to-end experience.

Increasingly, the same holds true in the world of healthcare,[3] with patients focusing on their experiences in addition to the quality of care they receive.

Remote patient monitoring can save the day here, too. By investing in RPM technologies, practices can engage patients by empowering them to take control of their own health, turning healthcare into more of a collaborative process than one driven by the doctor. With an RPM solution in place, physicians can identify problems before they spiral out of control, leading to improved health outcomes.

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[1] www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4226781/
[2] www.wsj.com/articles/customer-experience-is-the-key-competitive-differentiator-in-the-digital-age-1524246745
[3] www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/health-care/consumer-health-trends.html

What Are the Key Benefits of Remote Patient Monitoring?

At the same time, RPM tools represent the cutting edge of medical technology. As such, patients get the peace of mind that comes with knowing their doctors are committed to delivering the best care possible. Here are some additional benefits[1] for patients:

- · Access to detailed health information
- · Faster access to healthcare
- · More influence over their personal health, among other things

Add it all up, and RPM can have a transformative effect on the patient experience — which, according to a recent report from Deloitte,[2] correlates directly with higher profitability. In fact, compared to those who consider their experiences "moderate," each patient that says their experiences are "excellent" can drive as much as $444 extra revenue per adjusted patient day.

More Productive Staff

With the right RPM solution in place, your practice becomes considerably more productive,[3] because the technology can be administered by a third party, essentially becoming an extension of your team. Instead of managing patients in the office, providers can monitor important healthcare data remotely, only intervening as needed. Thanks to the built-in functionality that leading RPM solutions deliver, all relevant information is kept in one place automatically, giving physicians and their practices the information they need to deliver the best possible patient care.

Not only does this uptick in productivity help practices treat more patients more effectively, but it also frees doctors from even busier days, which can decrease the likelihood they suffer from physician burnout, a serious problem that affects more than two out of every five doctors.[4]

More Potential Patients and Effective Healthcare Utilization

Remote patient monitoring solutions enable practices to treat more patients more effectively.

On one hand, doctors can leverage real-time data to treat the patients who need it the most right when they need it — and not devote too much time to patients who are doing well. This ensures healthcare resources are utilized efficiently and effectively.

On the other hand, doctors can treat patients who live in a larger geographical area. Although a patient might not be keen on seeing a doctor whose office is 90 minutes away if they have to drive there every week, they might prefer to see the reputable specialist in-person occasionally, managing the bulk of their relationship using telehealth and RPM technology.

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[1] www.cta.tech/Resources/Newsroom/Media-Releases/2019/April/CTA-Survey-Finds-High-Demand-for-Remote-Patient-Mo

[2] www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/life-sciences-health-care/us-lshc-the-new-health-care-customer.pdf

[3] www.leadingage.org/white-papers/telehealth-and-remote-patient-monitoring-long-term-and-post-acute-care-primer-and

[4] www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health/physician-burnout-which-medical-specialties-feel-most-stress

What Are the Key Benefits of Remote Patient Monitoring?

Healthier Bottom Line

By improving health outcomes, reducing the incidence of acute care,[1] increasing patient satisfaction, increasing patient volume, and enhancing productivity across your operation, RPM technology has the ability to supercharge your practice's bottom line — which is a big deal in the era of ever-shrinking healthcare margins.

In this light, one investment in technology can go a long way toward significantly improving your practice's financial situation.

Forward-Thinking Mindset

When you deploy RPM technology across your operation, you're proactively pursuing cutting-edge innovations in medicine and redefining what's possible for your practice. By embracing this forward-thinking mindset, your practice is positioned to continuously invest in innovative tools, reinforcing the benefits we've already outlined in this section.

A practice that is hesitant to change anything isn't playing it safe. It's unlikely that today's healthcare patients will put up with an old-fashioned approach to their medical needs much longer.

At this point, you understand why the RPM market is thriving as more and more specialists and primary care physicians invest in the powerful new technology. In the next section, we'll examine the role remote patient monitoring solutions can play in your digital transformation journey.

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[1] www.bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/3/e040232

# RPM: The Next Step in Your Practice's Digital Transformation Care Journey

In recent years, healthcare practices have accelerated their digital transformation journeys as they continue to march toward value-based and virtual care.

In the 2000s, leading healthcare practices began making major investments in digital transformation by investing in electronic health record (EHR) solutions that digitized patient files, improved data collection, and increased overall compliance. Although it took a while for adoption to become widespread, nearly 86 percent of providers had invested in EHR by 2017, according to federal government data.[1]

With a reliable EHR system in place, practices began looking to take the next step in their digital transformation journeys by implementing telehealth solutions. If the patient is going in for a routine checkup and feels healthy, telehealth solutions might be the ideal medium for these kinds of visits. Patients don't have to make the trek to the doctor's office, and the doctor's office doesn't have to deal with juggling yet another patient, leading to improved patient experiences and more efficient offices.

Of course, telehealth adoption accelerated rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic when it became unsafe for patients and doctors to meet face-to-face. According to a recent study,[2] although telehealth accounted for just 0.3 percent of doctor visits in 2019, that number ballooned to 23.6 percent in 2020. Though there have been fewer telehealth visits in 2021, they've more or less stabilized at 38x higher than pre-pandemic levels, according to McKinsey.[3] And the global management consultancy sees no reason this trend will go away anytime soon.

86%
of providers had invested
in EHR by 2017

Telehealth Doctor Visits

percentage

23.6

0.3

2019   2020

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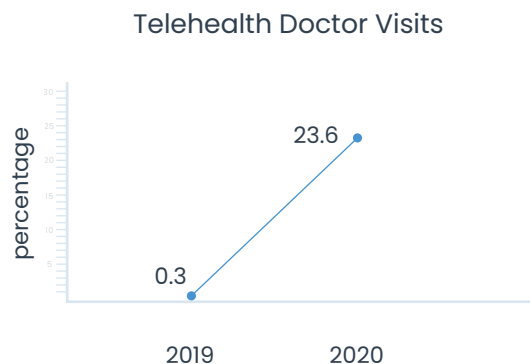
[1] www.dashboard.healthit.gov/quickstats/pages/physician-ehr-adoption-trends.php#:~:text=Summary%3A,from%2042%25%20to%2086%25.
[2] www.beckershospitalreview.com/cybersecurity/how-covid-19-drove-telehealth-adoption-8-key-study-findings.html
[3] www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare-systems-and-services/our-insights/telehealth-a-quarter-trillion-dollar-post-covid-19-reality

RPM: The Next Step in Your Practice's Virtual Care Journey

As physicians and specialists continue their pursuit of value-based care, more and more are looking to supplement their telehealth services by adding RPM solutions to the mix.

Although a doctor can't physically check a hypertension patient's blood pressure over a computer screen, they can view the data a wearable device generates and, when warranted, hop on a telehealth call to talk findings through with a patient.

Coupled with the benefits already discussed in this e-book, the fact that Medicare reimburses for the cost of RPM services at the same rate[1] as if the patient came into the office — regardless of where the originating site of care is — RPM is increasingly seen as a no-brainer for medical practices. Given that Medicare also offers payment opportunities for chronic care management,[2] this can be a great way to improve patient satisfaction while unlocking brand-new revenue streams.

Though remote patient monitoring can help you build a practice that achieves value-based care and delights patients and staff alike, no technology is a panacea. Unfortunately, you can't simply invest in RPM technology, snap your fingers, and hope for the best.

Up next, we'll examine some tips that can help you unlock the full potential of remote patient monitoring technology and chronic care management.

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[1] www.businessinsider.com/remote-patient-monitoring-industry-explained

[2] www.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/medicare-learning-network-mln/mlnproducts/downloads/chroniccaremanagement.pdf

4 Tips for Success

Getting the biggest benefits from remote patient monitoring starts with having a strategic plan in place. To increase the chances your investments in RPM and chronic care management deliver the returns you're looking for, keep these following tips for success top of mind as you begin implementing the new technology.
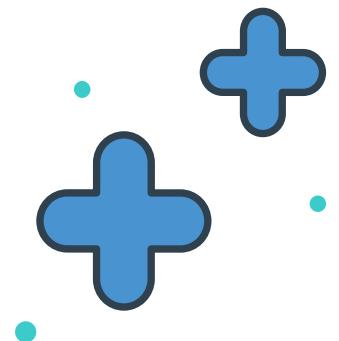
Develop a game plan.

Have patience.

Prepare your team.

Partner with the right provider.

4 Tips for Success

1. Develop a game plan.

By improving health outcomes, reducing Deciding to invest in RPM is one thing. Figuring out precisely how you're going to use the technology is something entirely different.

So, first things first: Do your due diligence ahead of time. Put together a plan about what RPM success will look like in your practice. For example, if you're a nephrologist, one of your top goals will likely be moving as many qualifying patients who are on dialysis as possible over to RPM solutions so you can effectively manage their conditions without requiring them to come to your office frequently.

2. Have patience.

When implementing any new technology, there's at least a bit of a learning curve.

Although some of the more technically proficient staffers and patients might have no issues becoming productive with the new technology, others may need a bit of a helping hand. (This is why it's so important to partner with the right RPM provider; more on that in a bit.)

As you begin rolling out RPM technology, be patient. Understand that results will not happen overnight, and that's okay. That said, when you have the right technology partner, the rollout should be more or less seamless.

3. Prepare your team.

To expedite the implementation process, consider setting aside time to train the folks in your practice. At the end of the day, succeeding with RPM starts with ensuring your team understands the benefits of the technology and how to identify ideal patients that it would help.

Remember, when you partner with the right RPM provider, they become an extension of your practice, allowing you to take advantage of cutting-edge technology without a heavy lift from your staff.

4. Partner with the right provider.

When it boils down to it, the right RPM partner has the power to make or break your experience with remote patient monitoring technology.

Choose the wrong solution, and the rollout can make you wonder why you even considered revamping your practice in the first place. Pick the right one, and you'll be wondering why you didn't make the move sooner.

Because so much is riding on the partner you ultimately decide to invest in, it is critical to know what to look for in a vendor before you begin searching for a solution — which brings us to our next section.

What to Look for in an RPM Provider

The benefits of RPM technology speak for themselves. But the success of your remote patient monitoring initiatives will ultimately depend on the vendor you select. As you start narrowing down your options, here are three things to be on the lookout for.

1. A Name You Can Trust

The last thing you want is to pour money into a solution only to find out the hard way it's not all it's cracked up to be. To accomplish your objectives, you need to invest in a solution that actually helps you achieve value-based care.

This is why it's so important to partner with a company that has a proven track record of success. For example, HealthWatch has built technology solutions for demanding specialty practices for more than 20 years. We're proud of what we've accomplished to date — and we're excited about what we can accomplish together with you.

2. A Powerful, Feature-Rich Solution

The right RPM solution should be packed with all the features your practice needs to thrive, including built-in coding and billing tools. For the best results, look for a solution that's easy to use, integrates with patients' personal health devices, supports secure clinical messaging, and gives patients access to their care plans, including goal-setting, self-management reminders, tracking, and recommendations.

3. An Extension of Your Team

Your medical practice is not a technology company. Practices simply don't have the ability to staff up overnight and deal with the headaches associated with hiring, training, and retaining employees. In other words, you don't have the staff needed to administer and manage an RPM solution.

When you partner with the right provider, you won't have to.

As an example, HealthWatch offers full-service RPM solutions, including tech support, chronic care management, and even device distribution and management. In other words, our team administers the whole process for you — giving you a new offering in your business while taking care of all of the heavy lifting on your behalf.

How RPM by HealthWatch Is Uniquely Positioned to Help Your Practice Thrive

As you can see, RPM technology truly has the power to transform your practice and accelerate your journey to value-based care. But making the most out of remote patient monitoring starts with deploying the right solution for your practice.

We might be a bit biased, but we believe that HealthWatch RPM is that solution.

At HealthWatch, by EverHealth, we work hard to stay on the cutting edge of the RPM space and are committed to continuously improving our offering. Our full-service solution enables your practice to effectively manage patient conditions without foregoing any more of your precious company resources.

With RPM by HealthWatch, you can improve health outcomes with timely and realistic care while tapping into new revenue streams — all without having to cover upfront costs or hire additional headcount.

It might sound too good to be true, but it isn't.

To see the easiest way to turn remote patient monitoring into a reality at your practice firsthand — and to start realizing RPM ROI right away — **request a demo of RPM by HealthWatch today.**[1]

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[1] https://isalushealthcare.com/products/remote-patient-monitoring/#demo