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Medco facilities partner with cardiac care firm on cardiac rehab for Bronx seniors

Four nursing and rehabilitation facilities in the Bronx, operated by Medco, have partnered with cardiac care company RecoveryPlus.health to offer seniors remote cardiac rehabilitation therapy once they return home, the organizations announced Tuesday.

Seniors can already get cardiac rehab at Bainbridge Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, East Haven Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Mosholu Parkway Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and the Wayne Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing after a hospital stay. This type of rehab can include relearning how to use stairs, do activities of daily living, and get stronger after they experience a heart issue. Now, through the partnership, patients can continue with the rehab after they are discharged from a Medco facility.

Cardiac rehab is particularly individualized to each patient, said Tim Bilbrey, RecoveryPlus.health's president and co-founder. It's tailored to the activity level the patient wants to return to and considers the underlying causes of the heart issues, he explained.

The rehab is traditionally only delivered in acute care hospitals, added Todd Ostrow, chief operating officer at Medco. Typically, Medco facilities have about two to four weeks with patients for rehab before they are discharged, which might not be enough time to ensure their quality of life when they get home, he said.

Rehab could help a patient traverse the stairs up to a walk-up apartment, but not the steps down the hallway to the front door, he added. The goal of the remote rehab program is for patients to continue to get better, thanks to technology they will already have been introduced to while at a Medco facility.

Peter Niemi, chief executive and co-founder of RecoveryPlus.health, said rehospitalization is common after patients return home from the hospital after cardiac episodes. The remote rehab program aims to lessen patients' chances of going back into the hospital. The app can monitor patients' vital signs, and they can use video calling and FaceTime to connect with specialists if an issue arises.

The four Medco facilities operate about 800 beds, with about 200 being for short-term care, Ostrow said. He added that the cardiac rehab program could treat more than 1,000 patients per year.

The Bainbridge, Mosholu and Wayne facilities are in the Norwood neighborhood of the Bronx; East Haven is in Pelham Gardens. RecoveryPlus.health also provides rehab services for patients with diabetes, pulmonary issues and long Covid.
—J.N.