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Baltimore expands telehealth program for seniors

By: Tim Curtis Daily Record Business Writer July 13, 2018

Baltimore has extended the Telehealth Intervention Program for Seniors program in the Park Heights community, hoping to reduce emergency room and hospital visits and emergency room visits.

The telehealth program remote monitors vital signs and social services for low-income adults over the age of 60.

“By utilizing the benefits of telehealth capabilities, we can ensure that many of our older citizens who may be unable to make regular visits to their medical professionals will have access to essential monitoring with the aim of identifying issues before they become more serious,” Mayor Catherine Pugh said in a statement. “I am grateful to our partners at MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital for helping make possible this latest health technology resource.”



Baltimore City Health Commissioner Dr. Leana Wen. (The Daily Record / Maximilian Franz)

The program was originally put in place in April at the Zeta Center for Healthy and Active Aging and has enrolled nearly 100 patients.

In Baltimore, MedStar provides regular remote nurse monitoring, vital signs tracking and diabetes and heart health education. The city health department screens for eligibility for benefits and resources and also provides education on health programs like chronic disease management and caregiving coaches.

“TIPS exemplifies two core principles of public health,” said Dr. Leana Wen, the city health commissioner. “First, TIPS goes to where people are, bringing care out of hospitals and into communities. Second, TIPS is all about prevention so that we can catch life-threatening developments early, before participants end up in the E.R. or the hospital.”

The telehealth program began in Westchester County, New York, and has expanded nationally since 2014. National data from other sites where the telehealth program is in place show that it has reduced hospital and emergency room visits by 35 percent.

The Baltimore program is part of a collaboration that includes MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital's Center for Successful Aging, the Westchester Public/Private Partnership and the Baltimore City Health Department, with funding from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

Tagged with: DR. LEANA WEN MAYOR CATHERINE PUGH TELEHEALTH



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