

OSF HealthCare provides at-home COVID-19 kits through Pandemic Health Worker (PHW) Program

In April, Peoria-based OSF HealthCare implemented its Pandemic Health Worker (PHW) program to ensure community members get the care they need without leaving home. A PHW serves as a connection between medical care providers and individuals who are suspected or have been confirmed to have COVID-19 and are in isolation.

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, OSF HealthCare added a fourteenth hospital to its Ministry with the addition of OSF HealthCare Little Company of Mary Medical Center in Evergreen Park, a 298-bed facility and the first Chicago hospital in the system. OSF Little Company of Mary was hit particularly hard with cases.

Gigi Wasz, a business development specialist at OSF HealthCare Little Company of Mary Medical Center, has been a part of the PWH program since it launched. Every morning, Wasz gets a list of community members who have requested assistance through the PHW Program and prepares her deliveries for the day.

“Before I head out, I call to let them know I’m coming and I ask where I can leave their package safely. Then I drop the kit off and stay on the phone with them while they get the kit and go through everything in it with them,” explained Wasz.

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, OSF Innovation, and OSF St. Gabriel Digital Health collaborated to create the remote monitoring program that allows people to receive supportive care while recovering where they are most comfortable, at home. PHWs in the field are specially trained and ready to be deployed seven days a week and the program serves about 500 clients each day and has helped thousands of people since it went live.

As part of the PHW Program, patients who begin experiencing more severe symptoms can send alerts and if their condition worsens, more tools are sent to the home to monitor vital signs, including oxygen levels. The at-home care program is enhanced with oversight by a physician or advanced practice provider, unless hospitalization is required.

“I am proud of how the Pandemic Health Worker Program has helped flatten the curve in Illinois. Throughout the course of this pandemic OSF has truly lived up to the mission – to serve with the greatest care and love,” said Wasz.

Learn more about OSF HealthCare’s Pandemic Health Worker Program [here](#).