



## ER Providers Turn to Tablets to Help Treat COVID-19 Patients

**For immediate release**

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**(Urbana, IL | April 9, 2020)** – OSF HealthCare has a new tool in its novel coronavirus (COVID-19) arsenal, designed to help conserve vital personal protective equipment (PPE) and reduce the risk of possible exposure for emergency department Mission Partners.

Emergency Department providers at both OSF HealthCare Heart of Mary Medical Center in Urbana and OSF HealthCare Sacred Heart Medical Center in Danville now have the ability to use tablets to communicate with patients who are suspected to have COVID-19.

Patients are given a tablet and communicate with the doctor remotely. The doctor, who is still in the Emergency Department, communicates with the patient via video conference. That communication can consist of screening questions, medical history and a question and answer period.

It is important to note that while these tablets are a tool to aid medical staff, they are not a replacement for a physician.

“Providers are still present and responsible for patient care,” said Dr. Kurt Bloomstrand, Medical Director of Emergency Medical Services, OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center. “Right now we want to provide the best patient care possible, but also lessen the potential exposure for our Mission Partners, and slow the burn rate for PPE. These tablets are checking all of those boxes.”

The tablets are an additional digital tool to better serve our patients and the community during this crisis. OSF HealthCare has also multiple digital options for patients looking for information and assistance:

**Clare, the digital assistant chatbot** on the [osfhealthcare.org](https://osfhealthcare.org), is now equipped to screen for and educate the public about COVID-19. Clare provides screening and education directly related to COVID-19 and will listen for symptoms of COVID-19 and ask relevant follow-up questions, such as travel history, and whether a person has been exposed to others with the illness. If necessary, Clare will direct patients to the COVID-19 Nurse Hotline.

**The COVID-19 Nurse Hotline - 833-OSF-KNOW (833-673-5669):** The COVID-19 Nurse Hotline is staffed by OSF registered nurses around the clock, and during times of heavy usage will be staffed by other OSF health care professionals.

**OSF SilverCloud:** For Mental Health Concerns, OSF SilverCloud is a FREE online platform available at [osfhealthcare.org/silvercloud](https://osfhealthcare.org/silvercloud). OSF SilverCloud is available 24/7 to help manage stress, anxiety and depression. It is backed by a live health care professional who can direct users to in-person or telehealth care if necessary.

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