



A COMMUNITY RESPONDS: YES, WE CAN.

And, virtually, they kept thousands of people safer from COVID-19.

A temperature of slightly above 100 is not always cause for alarm. But these days, it raises flags fast as a potential warning sign of COVID-19. So, as strict screening practices became the norm at Harris Health System primary care health centers and hospitals months ago, it became critical for us to find new ways to protect everyone—patients, doctors and staff—from anyone who might be unknowingly infected.

Our Ambulatory Care Services group grabbed the baton, quickly creating a special COVID-19 Navigation Program. The program allows physicians to refer patients exhibiting worrisome symptoms at any Harris Health location to a team of 34 nurse navigators who contact the patients to provide ongoing virtual follow-up care and quarantine instructions for 14 days.

Depending on their risk factors, the nurses call patients from three times a week to twice a day. If symptoms worsen, they help patients take appropriate next steps, from scheduling telehealth doctor visits to recommending a trip to the hospital.

Since March, these nurse navigators have made well over 60,000 calls to more than 5,000 patients, easing their minds, providing critical medical assistance and protecting them and thousands of others in the process.

This special team's care may be virtual, but their heroic deeds are very real to us all.

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