

OHSU's COVID-19 hotline helped Oregonians

OHSU's COVID-19 Connected Care Center was launched March 30, 2020. It included a Patient Hotline created to answer all OHSU patients' questions about COVID-19 that was rapidly expanded to serve people across the state. Callers spoke to nurses who assessed illness severity, provided education, and coordinated care as needed.

The COVID-19 Connected Care Center was effective

Between April 12 and May 26, 50 patient callers completed a brief exit survey and a subset participated in an interview about their experience with the Patient Hotline. Experiences were overwhelmingly positive.

- 90% would recommend this service to a friend or family member
- 86% got their questions answered during the call
- Callers were willing to pay to support this service, with the majority willing to pay \$100 a year

Callers appreciated the hotline for a range of reasons:

- There was no waiting
- Nurses were well-informed and often reduced callers' stress
- Callers did not feel rushed and received personalized information
- Callers with COVID-19 received assistance with managing their illness at home

KEY POINTS

- As of June 15, the hotline has taken over 8,000 calls
- The COVID-19 Connected Care Center helped people quickly access primary care
- 2% of callers were referred to the emergency department
- Three times as many people with COVID-19 received treatment in primary care as compared to the emergency department
- People's questions, concerns, and needs related to COVID-19 were addressed in a satisfying and complete way
- OHSU, as an academic health center, has the capacity as well as a unique and important role in providing access to primary care and to telehealth for Oregonians during crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic

What callers had to say about the hotline

"We have our daughters and our grandsons over on occasion to our house. I would just die a thousand deaths if I got the virus and passed it to my family. It's important to me that everyone be tested. It really relieved a lot of stress for me... it just relieved my mind to know that I wasn't going to give anybody the virus."

"The nurse and I discussed how to take steps to protect my girlfriend at home until we had her test results. We discussed distancing at home, cleaning, wearing masks, things like that."

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