



Doctors and Patients Connect Through Video Conferencing

AVI-SPL and Polycom help a pain therapy clinic reach out to its patients in California and cut down on costs through video collaboration.

Personal Therapy Without the Travel

As it underwent construction on new headquarters in San Mateo, the HELP Pain Clinic faced a challenge common to many healthcare service providers in an era of tightening budgets and staff shortages: finding an efficient, cost-effective way to deliver treatment to patients spread out over communities as many as three hours away. HELP's leaders knew that video collaboration was the answer. Through word of mouth, and an impressive demo session, they became convinced AVI-SPL was the right company to provide that answer.

The HELP Pain Clinic takes an interdisciplinary team approach to help those injured on the job to take control of their lives and re-enter the workforce. The organization includes 30 affiliate physician practice locations where HELP's services are administered, as well as three treatment centers in San Mateo, Fresno and Salinas.

Without a reliable solution, the clinic would continue to endure the expense, delay and inconvenience of practitioners traveling onsite, as well as inadequate communication with the patients' primary physicians. A suggested, never-implemented face-to-face video conferencing solution was deemed unsatisfactory as it lacked the intuitive interface and quick scalability in accordance with the clinic's plans for expansion.

AVI-SPL offered its reliable, dynamic and immersive Caméléon Telepresence system. This three-display solution would provide the high-quality resolution and network reliability needed for effective communication and collaboration among multiple sites. In August 2010, it demonstrated its solution to HELP founder Dr. William G. Brose and CEO Justin Kromelow at AVI-SPL's Video Briefing Center (VBC) in Chicago.

“We were really impressed with the AVI-SPL team. We saw the value of the role the integrator plays.”



Instead of commuting to San Mateo, patients and staff can now receive their education and training at one of the regional treatment centers.

Bridging Doctors and Patients with Video

To simultaneously bring HELP therapists and patients together through high-quality video, AVI-SPL installed two of its Caméléon Telepresence systems in the San Mateo and Fresno locations, employing industry-pacing Polycom codecs and bridges that would ensure smooth, latency-free connections. AVI-SPL enhanced the setup with touch-sensitive floor mats and whiteboards positioned to the side of each system. When a therapist stands on the mat in front of the whiteboard, a camera engages, allowing documents to be shared with the patients over Caméléon. While physicians teach from San Mateo, up to 12 patients can participate at a time from Fresno, along with another eight in Salinas, where AVI-SPL integrated a single-screen Polycom RealPresence video conferencing system.

To address the need for keeping primary care physicians aware of their patients' progress, AVI-SPL provided 100 Polycom RealPresence desktop clients for the physician partners and the staff, allowing them to connect with individual patients.

"We were impressed with AVI-SPL's focus and attention to get it right," Kromelow says.

A Therapy Provider Meets Community Needs

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August 2011, the clinic and its staff moved to its new space with the superior video collaboration tools that would empower them to provide their services in a dynamic, efficient way. Instead of commuting to San Mateo, patients and staff can now receive their education and training at one of the regional treatment centers. From their own offices, physicians can now easily stay on top of their patients' progress in the system.

Using Caméléon, HELP conducts classes (in Spanish and English) for its patients throughout the day in 30-minute to 1-hour blocks, focusing on rehabilitation through life and pain skills, so they can re-enter the workforce. HELP trainers want to make sure patients are moving in the right direction from a psychological perspective in terms of their rehabilitation. What would previously have taken hours of travel and staff time now happens in minutes, speeding patient recovery.

"The network gives us the opportunity to take highly trained providers and leverage our expertise across large geographic distances," says Brose. "Within six months, instructors and staff became quite expert at using the telepresence.

"There was a lot of anxiety at first, but the response has been uniformly positive," he adds. "The technology hasn't given anybody a sense of loss of personal connection."

The Polycom desktop clients have also improved the ability of doctors to complement HELP's therapy. Before AVI-SPL's integration, each patient's personal physician would

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Therapists in San Mateo make extensive use of the Caméléon system to train staff in the regional offices.

have neither participated nor understood the therapy HELP provided.

“Now physicians can partake in the six-week treatment,” Kromelow says, “and learn about what the goals are with the patient and help reinforce those goals.

“The reaction from the physicians has been phenomenal,” he says. “They have the satisfaction of having a positive patient outcome. It also simplifies their practice because they’re now managed.”

In addition to working with patients, therapists in San Mateo make extensive use of the Caméléon system to train staff in the regional offices.

“For the 15 minutes the patient may spend with the provider, there are a dozen interactions with the physicians and staff,” Kromelow says. Some of those interactions include optimizing a patient’s medications.

The collaboration solution has proven to be such an empowering success, HELP is now looking at addressing underserved communities in southern California.

“By using this technology, we not only leverage our providers from here to there, we take advantage of what that community has to offer,” Brose says.

“Without using this technology,” Kromelow adds, “we couldn’t do what we’re doing.”

At A Glance

Company

HELP Pain Medical Network

Location

San Mateo, CA

Market

Healthcare

Solutions

Video collaboration solutions — including a customized telepresence system — that brings together three of the clinic’s locations, and empowers HELP to treat patients and train staff via video.

Services

Integration

Two telepresence systems, as well as a single-screen Polycom RealPresence video conferencing system and RealPresence desktop clients.

Technology Involved

Custom telepresence with Polycom codec
Polycom RealPresence video conferencing
Polycom RealPresence desktop clients

About AVI-SPL

At AVI-SPL, we believe that the right connections empower the ideas and innovation that drive business forward. As the world’s leading AV and video communications partner, AVI-SPL designs, builds, integrates and supports the systems and environments that enable communication and collaboration.

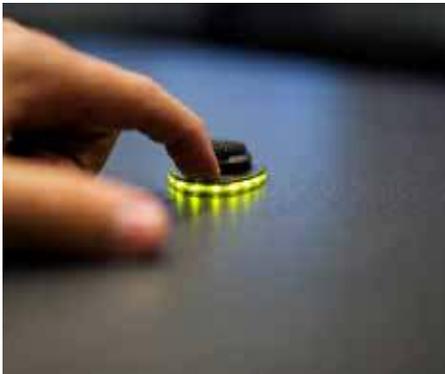
With highly-trained and certified system engineers throughout the world, we’ve built the infrastructure and partnerships to help any business meet its communication goals.

About Polycom

Polycom helps organizations unleash the power of human collaboration. More than 400,000 companies and institutions worldwide defy distance with video, voice and content solutions from Polycom. Polycom and its global partner ecosystem provide flexible collaboration solutions for any environment that deliver the best user experience and unmatched investment protection.

Featured Partner





Images

Fig 1.1
AVI-SPL integrated a customized telepresence system that empowers HELP Pain Medical Network to train its staff and treat patients.

Fig 1.2
One of the three high-definition cameras that are part of each telepresence system.

Fig 1.3
A tiered seating arrangement gives participants a clear view of the collaboration displays.

Fig 1.4
Participants can choose to mute and unmute themselves with ease while participating in a telepresence session.

Fig 1.5
HELP Pain Medical Network's telepresence system comes with a dedicated panel for sharing presentations.