

# Utilizing Tech for Good to Increase Health Equity in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

Intel, Henry Schein-Medpod, with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota collaborate to enhance healthcare access and reduce disparity



## About Henry Schein-Medpod

Henry Schein Inc, is a healthcare solutions company that improves outcomes for over 1-million customers worldwide with a centralized and automated distribution network of over 300 solutions. Henry Schein has partnered with Medpod, Inc in 2013 in order to help revolutionize the delivery of care. Medpod's mission is to enable healthcare providers to extend reach, redistribute resources, build volume, and grow their business.

## While the current healthcare system has much to offer, it has gaps

On a surface level, the United States of America has one of the most robust and high-quality healthcare systems in the world; but that care and quality doesn't always receive equal distribution. Because limitations in access, and disparity in best-in-care medical practices and equipment is enmeshed in a painful and complex socioeconomic history, marginalized communities are disproportionately impacted, and are ultimately forced to bear the financial and physical costs of this otherwise comprehensive and innovative system.

It is a painful reality that has exacerbated unnecessary suffering, increased mortality among the nation's most vulnerable people, and a strain on society that continues to grow the longer it goes unmitigated. Clearly, these are issues that must be solved, for both the human costs, and the stressors it adds to the healthcare industry. But before it can, the root causes of these inequities must be understood.

## So how did this come to be?

Though there are many nuanced answers to that question, it is in part the consequence of a centralized healthcare system that fundamentally prioritizes sustainability and consistency, over the scope and reach of care. In essence, population dense urban areas tend to host centers of excellence: brick-and mortar locations where doctors operate and have access to expensive, best-in-care medicine and equipment. This creates a distributed network where populations that live further away from urban centers have a harder time accessing the same quality of health services.

Conversely, healthcare providers who aim to offer high-quality care to underserved populations face challenges relative to sustainability and costs of delivery. When combined with the consequences of historic inequity, these rifts create lower levels of accessibility across the healthcare services spectrum, as doctors are faced with difficult choices when it comes to utilizing the resources necessary to help decentralized or marginalized populations.

As such, healthcare for these communities has devolved into a vicious circle of accessibility and disparity that perpetuates a lack of accessible health education and preventative care, further fueling anguish, hampering proactive measures, and postponing intervention. Such delays can turn treatable conditions into critical emergencies, leading to lasting health repercussions and premature death that traumatizes families and communities, thus perpetuating cycles of generational trauma.

**But what are the true costs of these disparities? How are they quantified? How are they known?**

A microcosm of this inequity is found in Brooklyn Center, one of Minnesota’s most diverse municipalities where the impacts of COVID-19, along with limited primary, dental, mental, maternal, and other forms of healthcare have exacerbated trauma in the community.<sup>1,2</sup>

In an attempt to understand the people they aspire to serve and solve the challenges diverse and distant communities need to overcome, Blue Cross has been investigating these hard questions. In researching these discrepancies, they found that between \$1.2 - \$2.9 billion dollars per-year were lost in Minnesota on services that could have been mitigated through preventative care.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, Medpod – a telehealth systems developer – discovered from data collected through their MOBILEDOC telehealth field response cart program in New York, that an efficient community-based network of telehealth services could lower emergency room visits by 86% and reduce inpatient services by 26%.<sup>4</sup>

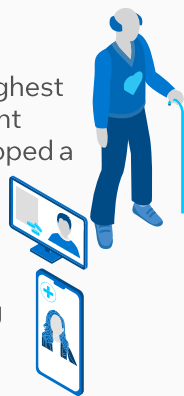
**Medpod’s Telediagnostic Impact on Health Center Customers in New York was...<sup>4</sup>**

Greater than

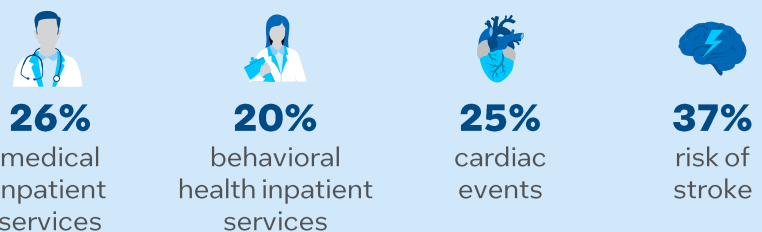


Significant impact

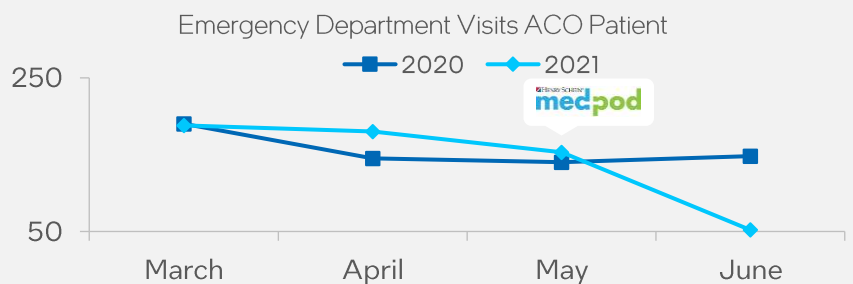
on the lowest activated, highest acuity enrollees. The Urgent Care Program team developed a segmentation model to identify enrollees with the highest acuity and lowest activation scores — i.e. the sickest individuals needing the most support



Overall reductions in highest cost utilization



**By the end of the first 12 months of their enrollment in the program, compared to the comparison period six months prior to enrollment**



**This evidence suggests changes to healthcare delivery must occur**

Rectifying these disparities necessitates more than superficial solutions. Achieving this paradigm shift entails collaboration, strategic planning, and empathy from all healthcare stakeholders to drive improved outcomes in marginalized communities. Technology can play a role in solving these problems and many corporations in the technology sector have made attempts at addressing these systemic issues. However, not all efforts have been successful, further complicating trust, stoking apathy, and weakening synergies between the people who need care the most, and institutions with the capital and power to enact change necessary to deliver it.

## With the help of Intel, Medpod is developing tools that align with best-in-care medical practices

For over a decade, Medpod has been aiming to solve these systemic challenges faced by the healthcare industry. By scaling through strategic alliances with corporations like Henry Schein and Intel, Medpod has found a support ecosystem and flexibility necessary to conduct the complex research and development necessary to bring highly creative solutions to market that can help solve serious societal and economic challenges.

This ultimately resulted in the development of five worldclass products: a telehealth video delivery system, MEDPAC® an ultralightweight tele-diagnostic backpack, MOBILEDOC® a carry-on sized telehealth workstation, STREAMLINE POWER CART a remote physician-patient system with a 24-hour battery, and the PORTABLE TRIAGE CENTER a rapidly deployable exam room.

Presently, Medpod's highly advanced technology garners global acclaim, with corporations worldwide utilizing it to develop and implement their own state-of-the-art healthcare solutions.

## Payors and providers are fighting for change in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

Drawn by Medpod's reputation for excellence, Blue Cross sought the guidance and expertise of these allied institutions, due to their combined culture, ethos, and passion for advancing accessibility to top-tier technology and services.

Together, they developed a pilot program that delivers Medpod's cutting-edge telehealth solutions to places where the residents of Brooklyn Center already spend their time: community centers, places of worship, and their homes.

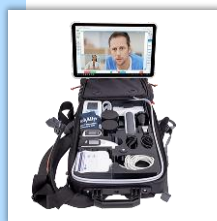
At the heart of this initiative lies the promise of augmented access to medical care and heightened engagement for challenging patient populations. Medpod's innovative platform has the potential to break down the traditional barriers that often deter underserved populations from seeking medical attention. By deploying these solutions with the help of trusted community leaders, the initiative is helping create environments that ease the stigmas surrounding medical care by inviting individuals to be collaborators within the healthcare ecosystem.

## Medpod Hardware/Software Platform



### MOBILEDOC®

Robust professional tele-diagnostic capabilities packed into a carry-on bag. It's the ultimate portable practice.



### MEDPAC®

Ultra Portable tele-diagnostic capabilities in a backpack. Carry access to care anywhere



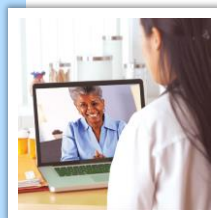
### STREAMLINE POWER CART

Our streamlined power cart enables high-quality, remote physician-patient encounters on par with a face-to-face visit, all with high-quality tediagnostic devices with all day battery power



### PORTABLE TRIAGE CENTER

Transforming Frontline Care Setup an 8'x12' triage/exam room anywhere with a 110v connection or generator.



### Video Only

A direct to patient video consultation service for practitioners that's fully browser-based for easy virtual consultations, anytime, anywhere.



### Live Translation Services

Remote video translation maintains high-level patient care with visual communication.

## Professional Telediagnosics



Vitals



Stethoscope



Exam Camera



EKG



Spirometry



X-RAY/PACS



Vision



Dental



Hearing  
Screening



Ultrasound



Colposcope



Concussion  
Testing



Bone Density



Retinopathy



ABI

## How Brooklyn Center uses the versatile capabilities of Medpod solutions

Owing to the mobile and rugged design of Medpod's versatile form factors, care facilitators can rapidly deploy to accident sites, provide immediate field triage, transition to schools for planned preventative care and educational services, and conclude the day with house calls to seniors or immobilized individuals. As such, this coalition infuses a renewed sense of hope for communities and healthcare practitioners by deploying mobile response units that help bridge disparities and dismantle barriers to access.

Fundamentally, Medpod's solutions focus on collaborative innovation, and equip professionals with the same cutting-edge technology found in leading hospitals, thus altering healthcare delivery by providing a less stressful and more accessible healthcare experiences to individuals.

The effectiveness of Medpod's solutions resides in its multifaceted capabilities which span advanced diagnostics to swift emergency response. It operates as a self-contained unit, capable of delivering a broad spectrum of healthcare services to accessible and challenging environments alike, to the individuals who need them most, through a diverse range of telehealth professionals.

These are more than gadgets; they are revolutionary tools that redefine how healthcare professionals provide medical care. Operated by trained care facilitators, and augmented by remote healthcare professionals, Medpod solutions encourage patients to become educated, involved, and active stakeholders in their own healthcare journeys. Conversely, for healthcare professionals, Medpod solutions integrate next-generation clinical decision support, enriched by artificial intelligence and machine learning, enhanced diagnostics, and the data analytics necessary to enable proactive and precise decision-making.

## Bridging gaps and earning trust by utilizing Tech for Good

In a community like Brooklyn Center, this technology bridges the divide between physical facilities and patients by giving people an avenue to officially engage with a primary care physician and establish their unique baseline of care. Most of all, this approach helps reduce stress, achieve meaningful outcomes, strengthen trust between health care institutions and communities historically apprehensive and skeptical of medical institutions.

This pilot signifies not just healthcare, but the normalization of holistic well-being. Through this approach, Medpod products have helped reduce both the cost of care and unnecessary hospitalizations where deployed. Their advanced product designs allow for rapid deployment to varied locations, breaking down geographical barriers and healthcare disparities. The promise of seamless delivery of quality care via the Medpod solution plays a pivotal role in encouraging patients to engage as more than patients, but rather as active partners. By providing the potential for immediate access to medical attention and personalized care plans, this initiative promotes a sense of inclusivity and engagement. Moreover, it has the potential to cultivate a profound shift in the way healthcare is perceived within underserved communities, transforming it from a distant and daunting prospect to an integral part of peoples' daily lives.

In essence, the deployment of the Medpod solution in Brooklyn Center signifies a significant stride towards equitable healthcare access, addressing historical disparities and aiming to redefine the relationship between healthcare institutions and the people they serve. By leveraging cutting-edge technology to bridge gaps and foster engagement, Medpod has not only introduced a solution but also a catalyst for positive change within the lives of those who need it most.

## This isn't just about providing care; it's about empowerment. This isn't just a tool; it's a movement

The collaborative endeavor involving Intel, Medpod, Henry Schein, and Blue Cross, mirrors a fusion of vision, resources, and passion. With each institution bringing their unique strengths to the table, the Medpod initiative in Brooklyn Center exemplifies how technology can be harnessed not only for technical excellence but also to drive positive societal impact in a way that is not superficial or insincere. Together, these entities are paving the way to a future where technology-powered healthcare solutions bring transformative change to underserved communities, enhancing healthcare access, and ultimately saving lives.



"Blue Cross sees the harnessing of technology as a movement to empower communities, particularly those facing deep inequities. This work in Brooklyn Center can be transformational for us as a healthcare organization, and transformative for communities, as we are better able to help them live their healthiest lives."



**- Bukata Hayes**

Vice President of Racial & Health Equity  
and Chief Equity Officer  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

## A new hope for healthcare professionals, payors, and people

The significance of this endeavor is underscored by the strong belief that a similar impact could be achieved in initiatives elsewhere. This deployment holds the potential to bring about a remarkable reduction in hospitalizations and a transformative shift in healthcare delivery.

The impact on underserved communities, especially those with limited economic means, cannot be overstated. At Brooklyn Center, the Medpod solution effectively bridges geographical gaps, offering the promise of immediate and equitable access to best-in-care medical practices and equipment. This addresses critical issues such as transportation barriers for rural populations or individuals confined to their residence, uninsured costs, and the overall ease of access to healthcare services by providing the entire spectrum of treatment from homecare, ambulatory services, sub-acute and acute treatment, and urgent care.

As this collaboration bridges the gaps between medical necessity and economic sustainability, it heralds a new era of hope and purpose. For communitarians and medical professionals wrestling with the agonizing decision of allocating care to those in need against the backdrop of financial viability, the Medpod solutions emerge as a powerful symbol of hope in the future of healthcare.

By seamlessly integrating advanced healthcare capabilities with the imperative for balanced economics, this platform makes real change that inspires medical professionals to truly live by the Hippocratic Oath, knowing that groundbreaking technology and industry partners support their commitment to holistic care.

Similarly, people are beginning to embrace the fact that compassionate care can coexist with the practicalities and economics of sustaining healthcare practices.

This remarkable partnership illuminates a new path toward a future where medical professionals can embrace their mission with unwavering enthusiasm, and communities can integrate revitalized healthcare services with newfound optimism and trust.

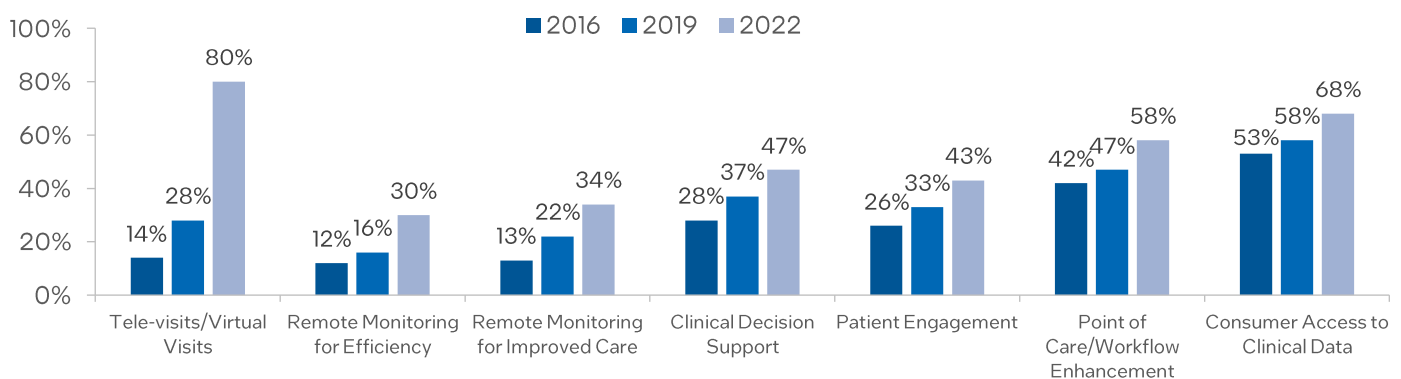
Medpod solutions aren't merely technological devices; they serve as a lifeline for historically underserved populations. They act as a bridge connecting innovation and trust, convenience and comprehensive care. Its mobility and self-sufficiency enable rapid responses to emergencies, mitigating adversity and preventing enduring consequences. In the heart of Brooklyn Center, the proactive initiatives of Blue Cross combined with Intel's state-of-the-art compute, and Medpod's engineering, is more than a formidable alliance, it is a symbol of progress, a beacon of hope, and a testament to what collaborative innovation can achieve. It's not just about deploying a telehealth solution; it's about igniting a transformation that empowers patients, bridges gaps, and redefines what healthcare can be.

If you're interested in deploying Medpod technology in your community, please visit:

- [Medpod Health Homepage](#)
- [Henry-Schein Medpod Solutions Hub](#)

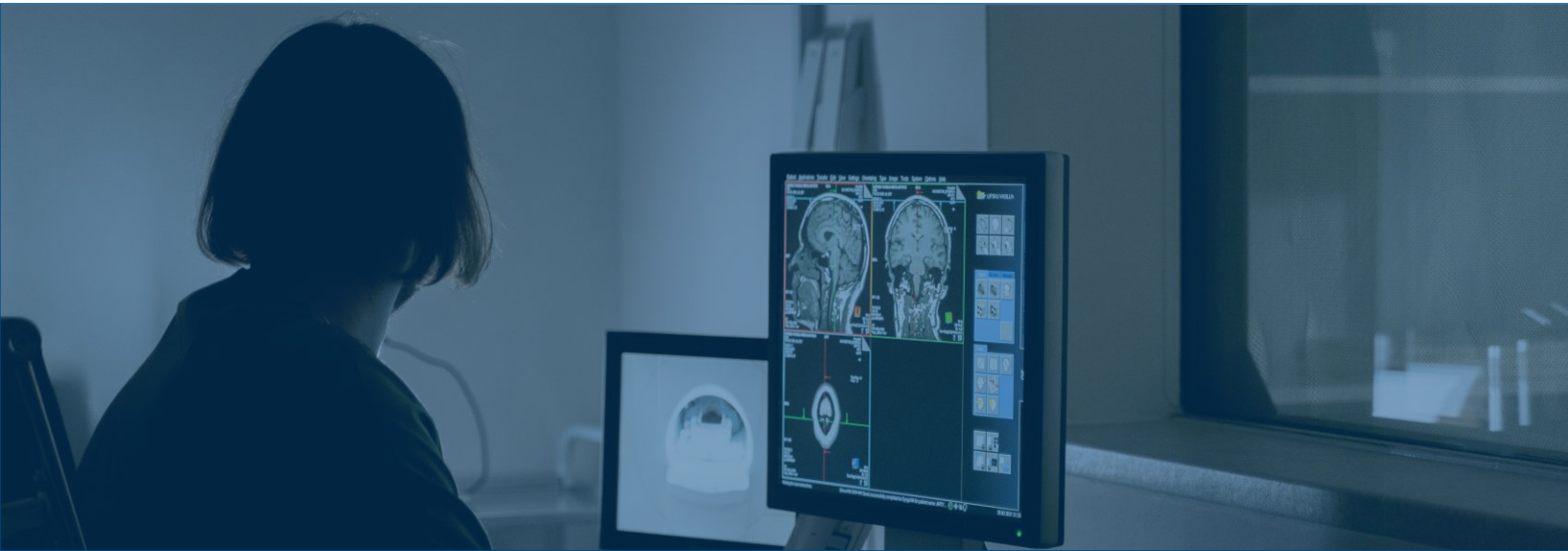
Or reach out to – [info@medpodhealth.com](mailto:info@medpodhealth.com)

Use of Tele-Visits/Virtual Visits and Remote Monitoring for Efficiency and Improved Patient Care<sup>5</sup>



## For more information about Intel's Tech for Good collaborators

- [Medpod Health](#)
- [Medpod - Henry Schein Solutions Hub](#)
- [Home - Henry Schein Solutions Hub](#)
- [Blue Cross Minnesota Health Equity](#)
- [Blue Cross Minnesota Cost of Health Inequities](#)
- [Intel Healthcare](#)
- [Intel Responsible Inclusive Sustainable Enabling \(RISE\) Strategy and Goals](#)



1. [Hurdle Health and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Begin Partnership Focused on Culturally Responsive Mental Health Care – Blue Cross, 2022](#)
2. [Addressing dental and maternal health outcomes for Minnesota's BIPOC communities – MinnPost, 2023](#)
3. [The Economic Benefits of Reducing Racial Disparities in Health: The Case of Minnesota – MDPI, 2019](#)
4. [Long Island Deployment Internal Research – Medpod, 2022](#)
5. [Use of Digital Health Tools in Practice – American Medical Association, 2022](#)

### Notices & Disclaimers

Intel is committed to respecting human rights and avoiding complicity in human rights abuses. See Intel's [Global Human Rights Principles](#). Intel® products and software are intended only to be used in applications that do not cause or contribute to a violation of an internationally recognized human right.

Intel technologies may require enabled hardware, software or service activation. No product or component can be absolutely secure. Your costs and results may vary. Intel does not control or audit third-party data. You should consult other sources to evaluate accuracy.

© Intel Corporation. Intel, the Intel logo, and other Intel marks are trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries. Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.