

West Michigan Companies Working Together for Access to Healthcare

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Communities of every size are facing concerns stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, and Grand Haven is no exception. But, amidst the negative headlines two local healthcare organizations continue to push for improvements in patient care.

Early on in the crisis, North Ottawa Community Health System (NOCHS) rose to the challenge of providing testing, and recently expanded testing access thanks, in part, to relationships with local employers.

In fact, it's the strength of those relationships that have enabled NOCHS to ramp up innovation in recent years bringing new and enhanced services to market, as well as programmatic solutions to drive down cost. In early 2019, NOCHS became the first HealthBridge Network Provider and first employer in the country to offer HealthBridge—a new employee benefit that provides a financial safety net to employees to cover the out-of-pocket medical costs on employer-sponsored health plans.

"Rising deductibles are costing employees their peace of mind, to the point where some avoid care completely," said HealthBridge co-founder Amy Chambers. "This is increasingly true in our current crisis. We help give employees a financial safety net, so that when they want or need care, they can get it with confidence."

HealthBridge offers a program for healthcare providers, and an ERISA benefit plan to supplement an employer's health plan. NOCHS was the first organization for both programs. "We have seen the benefit of HealthBridge from all angles," said Jen VanSkiver, Chief Communications Officer at NOCHS. "From the employer side, we are pleased to offer a benefit that helps our staff better manage their personal health care expenses. From the provider side, we benefit by receiving immediate payment from Healthbridge that improves cash flow, and we are removed from the burdensome task of expending limited resources on payment collections, which can sometimes stretch out for months."

HealthBridge is based in Grand Rapids. To learn more about HealthBridge visit myhealthbridge.com.