Pulse Oximetry for Home Use

There is currently no clinical standard recommending home pulse oximetry use for COVID-19 patients. However, a pulse oximeter may serve as an early-warning device for potential patient decompensation. A provider may prescribe home pulse oximetry to assist the primary care provider in determining when a patient should be considered for additional follow-up or an inpatient stay, while conserving resources for those who are acutely ill.

Consider ordering home pulse oximetry for ‘potentially at risk’ patients who present to a physician office, a FURI clinic, or an Emergency Department who, in the provider’s judgement, could remain at home despite being ill with COVID-19, but may be at greater risk for decline in condition due to underlying health problems or other patient factors.

Obtaining Home Pulse Oximetry

Trinity Health Ministry hospitals do not provide pulse oximetry services directly, as most do not own a Medicare certified Durable Medical Services (DME) company. Pulse Oximeters are frequently not covered by insurance.

Pulse oximetry monitoring can be obtained by:
1. Referral to a home health agency that offers virtual monitoring services (such at Trinity Health at Home agencies, Mercy Home Health-TH Mid-Atlantic, Eddy Visiting Nurse Association, etc.); OR

2. Providing the patient with a script for the home pulse oximeter.
   a. Also provide patient with a list of DME providers who can deliver the pulse oximeter to the patient’s home.
   b. Instruct the patient to follow up with their primary care provider.

References


