



Mobile Workstations:
Expand + Evolve
the Point of Care
Ecosystem



As the point of care ecosystem continues to advance and become more digital, mobile workstations are taking a more prominent role in ambulatory care. No longer just a piece of furniture, mobile workstations are a strategic component of care delivery that can impact efficiency, accessibility and the patient-caregiver experience. Most recently, mobile workstations have played a vital role in helping caregivers respond to challenges presented by COVID-19.

This white paper looks at four important ways mobile workstations are helping expand and evolve the point of care ecosystem.

Enhancing Access + Quality of Care

Better care starts with a better design for the care environment—one that focuses on not just the space, but the delivery of care, workflow and technology for a more patient-centered approach that can help improve the point of care experience and clinical outcomes.

An important piece of this patient-centered design approach is the mobile workstation. Workstations have been a central fixture in most exam rooms for many years, designed to streamline workflows and support interactions occurring within that space. While clinical encounters have traditionally occurred in an exam room setting where caregivers meet with patients in person, that practice is being challenged. Advanced technology and the shift to create a more accessible, patient-centered experience are driving the need to expand the point of care outside the traditional model.

This shift has been further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the delivery of care. Some organizations have been forced to establish triage sites to meet demand from growing patient populations, while many others are taking a renewed look at patient-caregiver interactions and how care can be delivered safely and effectively to achieve improved outcomes. Telehealth has quickly risen as a more viable and long-lasting option for many physician practices and clinics.

All of these factors are placing workstations front and center in the evolution and expansion of the point of care, helping ensure the time shared between the caregiver and patient remains the most important, meaningful and unobstructed aspect of the healthcare journey.



Expanding + Evolving the Point of Care Ecosystem

Following are four important ways mobile workstations can be the strategic backbone for expanding and evolving the point of care ecosystem.



Centralizing the Digital Ecosystem

The adoption of electronic medical records (EMR) and the consumerization of healthcare are combining to drive a growing need for connected technology and devices at the point of care. Patients and caregivers are wanting to be connected with healthcare in the same way they are digitally connected with other aspects of their lives.

This greater connectivity is paving the way for the digitization of the point of care ecosystem, which in turn promises to bring more accurate and in-depth data and information to the patient visit. The challenge is deploying that technology and accessing the information in a way that does not negatively impact the point of care experience.

Mobile workstations can centralize the digital ecosystem, providing healthcare organizations with a flexible solution for integrating connected technology and bringing data to the point of care without sacrificing workflow. Mobile workstations also give caregivers a focal point for seamlessly interacting with the digital ecosystem and accessing data without impeding patient-caregiver interaction.

Most workstations have accessories that can be added, based on particular need, to support and manage technology integration at a very basic level. These can include AC power systems, dual monitor mounts, and coiled power cords and holders for tablets, laptops and monitors.

On the digital side, workstations can enable caregivers to integrate the EMR into the point of care while helping preserve the intimate and humanistic aspects involved in care delivery. For instance, adjustable mobile workstations allow caregivers to share information and maintain eye contact with patients.

Taking Healthcare Everywhere

As healthcare organizations work to make the delivery of care more patient-centered and accessible, there is a need for the point of care ecosystem to expand both physically and digitally. Mobile workstations provide the flexibility and stability needed for this expansion to occur, helping extend the point of care ecosystem beyond the four walls of the traditional exam room to meet the needs of patients.

Whether it's setting up a temporary triage area or establishing a new workflow, mobile workstations can provide a point of convergence wherever clinician and patient interactions occur. Workstations also allow caregivers to securely bring valuable information, medication, supplies and equipment with them as they treat patients. In many instances, battery-powered mobile workstations continue to be a vital fixture in the overflow wings, triage sites and temporary facilities hospitals set up to care for COVID-19 patients.

The push toward telehealth, which is an ongoing part of healthcare's response to COVID-19, highlights another vital role mobile workstations can play in delivering care anywhere. Mobile workstations offer an optimal platform for introducing telehealth, providing an ideal location for the monitor and necessary storage.

While COVID-19 is being considered a breakthrough moment for telehealth, many healthcare organizations are still ill-equipped to efficiently accommodate the shift in care delivery. Many mobile workstations currently on the market provide the customization, standard features and accessories needed to assist with a health system's unique telehealth program. They can easily incorporate technology such as cameras while allowing providers to maintain an ergonomically correct working position, whether seated or standing.

Enhancing Patient-Caregiver Interaction

The very heart of the point of care ecosystem is the interaction that occurs between patients and caregivers. Mobile workstations are designed to strengthen that interaction by supporting a seamless patient and caregiver experience. They allow clinicians to make the most of their space while maintaining their focus on the patient, helping keep patient experience and interaction top of mind as opportunities for efficiency gains are considered and implemented. The mobility aspect provides flexibility for rooms to be easily customized and space-saving measures to be taken.

And as these interactions move beyond the four walls of the exam room, mobile workstations can help ensure their integrity. By placing equal emphasis on experience and increased efficiency, workstations help prevent other factors from infringing on the patient-caregiver interaction. For instance, by bringing information and technology within arm's reach, workstations can decrease the caregiver's need to move within the space, maximizing engagement with patients. Workstations can also allow clinicians to input vital patient data into the EMR during the visit without sacrificing eye contact with the patient.

And when they are no longer needed as part of the visit, mobile workstations can be easily put away or moved to another part of the room, providing the necessary space for the interaction to continue.

Improving Ergonomics

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for many caregivers to go home at the end of their shift with back pain, aching necks, and sore muscles and joints. This is often the result of caregivers having to continuously work in uncomfortable positions utilizing poor ergonomics while entering information into the EMR, accessing supplies or interacting with patients.

Mobile workstations designed to promote proper ergonomics can be an essential tool for eliminating unnecessary straining and improving caregiver comfort and safety at the point of care.

Adjustable, mobile workstations allow caregivers to maintain a proper, ergonomic working position while maintaining eye contact with the patient. They allow physicians to work in the way they are most comfortable, whether that be seated, standing, mobile or stationary. Some workstations feature 26" of height adjustment while offering tilt and rotation functionality to allow for a proper working position.

Lightweight, mobile workstations with sturdy caster bases mean caregivers can easily move them from room to room with little effort. Fully adjustable arms enable monitors to be easily positioned for both sitting and standing postures, eliminating neck and eye strain.

When it comes to ergonomic principles, not all mobile workstations are created equal. Poorly designed and ill-fitting workstations can sometimes do more harm than good (See *below*.)

Workstations Designed for Today's Healthcare Professionals

Most workstations found in clinical environments are not designed for today's diverse healthcare providers.

They support either a seated or a standing workflow for a limited range of staff heights, requiring most users to bend or stretch to reach supplies and equipment, crane their necks to read from a monitor, or hunch over to type on a keyboard. This can dramatically impact provider well-being, resulting in repetitive strain injuries to the back, neck and shoulders.

Midmark studied more than 20 healthcare facilities across the US to identify elements that were missing from current workstations. Working closely with healthcare staff and ergonomics experts, we designed a workstation that is intuitive for the user, supports the deployment of technology at the point of care, and properly supports the patient-caregiver interaction and clinical workflow.

Midmark® Workstations also are ergonomically designed to support the needs of nearly all users (95 percent), from those with heights in the 5th percentile (5'0" female) to the 95th percentile (6'4" male)—and everyone in between.

Midmark Workstations offer:

- An intuitive guidance label and lever to allow for an easily adjustable workstation height that requires little force.
- Easy vertical adjustment to promote proper posture with neck, shoulder, arm and wrist alignment.
- 180 degrees of left-to-right monitor rotation to promote content sharing and continuous eye contact between provider and patient (workstations with monitor arm).





As the point of care expands digitally and physically beyond the exam room, the mobile workstation is a critical piece of equipment that can help clinicians deliver better care to their patients.

The right workstation can help centralize the digital ecosystem, take healthcare everywhere, improve ergonomics and enhance caregiver-patient interaction. Ultimately, this better positions ambulatory care environments to improve the quality of care delivered and outcomes achieved.



Designing better care.™