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## **Business of Medicine: At-home testing: A lab where you live**



Sollis Health offers a variety of diagnostic procedures in a patient's home.

SOLLIS HEALTH

Along with scheduling their classes and signing up for housing, students returning to the University of Miami for the Fall 2020 semester had one more task: Submit a negative Covid-19 test result.

Administrators hoped this wouldn't require an onerous - and risky - visit to a lab at the height of the pandemic. Instead, students were sent at-home test kits purchased and shipped by the school. Collect a sample, drop the kit in a FedEx box and, a day or so later, log in to a portal to see the results.

The effort highlighted the school's goal of "continued flexibility - and more testing" to counter the pandemic and allow for a safe return to in-class instruction, UM President [Julio Frenk](#) said in a statement at the time.

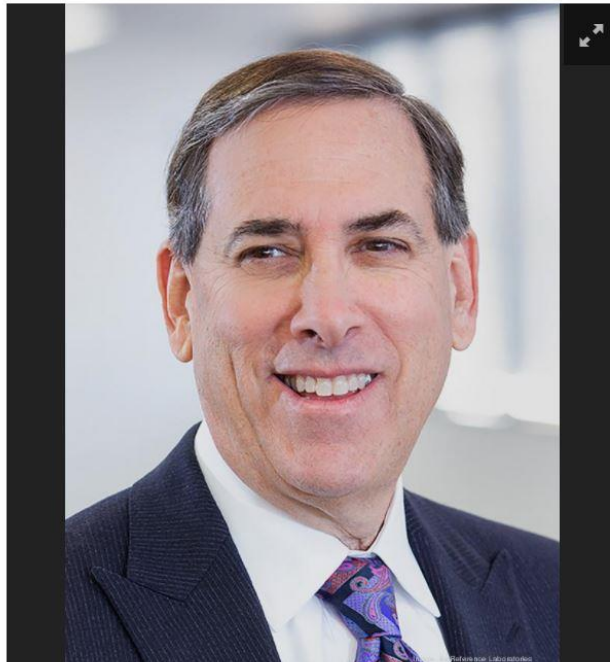
The school was also riding a wave of at-home diagnostics. From lab work to cardiac tracking to X-rays and other diagnostic procedures, the home is replacing the lab or facility.

The kit UM students used was from Pixel by Labcorp. The service allows consumers to request dozens of tests, including for Covid-19, colorectal cancer, diabetes and lipid panels. No physician orders are necessary and insurance is not accepted. Purchase the desired lab - typically well under \$200 - and a Labcorp physician will immediately review the request and write the order. Some samples can be gathered at home; others - like those requiring a blood draw - can be scheduled at a nearby Labcorp location.

In fact, half of all blood draws are done in a patient service center. That's likely to change. The at-home testing kits market is forecast to grow from \$8.87 billion in 2019 to \$16.02 billion by 2027, according to Data Bridge Market Research. Many companies are staking their claim, including Abbott, Siemens, True Diagnostics and Fort

Lauderdale-based Trividia Health, which develops, manufactures and markets blood glucose monitoring products.

At-home diagnostics are changing the model, said Dr. [Jon R. Cohen](#), executive chairman of BioReference Laboratories. Earlier this year, the subsidiary of Miami-based Opko Health launched in-home diagnostic collection service Scarlet Health.



Dr. Jon R. Cohen, executive chairman, BioReference Laboratories

BIOREFERENCE LABORATORIES

Whether self-administered or performed by a technician dispatched to the home, in-home diagnostics remove the hassle from the process, from missing work to waiting in crowded patient centers, he said. With Scarlet Health, a physician submits the order. The patient then receives a text to register and pick a time for the in-home appointment. They even receive a photograph of the technician.

“Like Uber, you can track the person to the door,” Cohen said.

Patients are charged for tests the same as if they were done at a service center. The patient then is notified and can log in to see the results, which are made available to referring physicians through one of 1,200 electronic health records platforms.

“Transparency is very important,” Cohen said. “With people seeing their results, I’m a big believer of knowledge is power.”

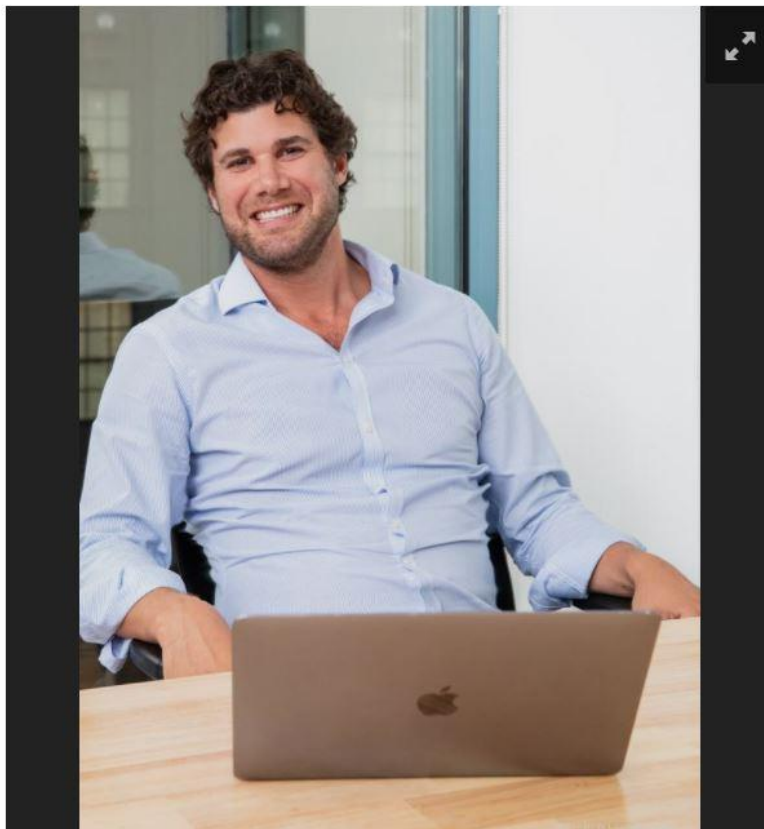
At-home services characterize their patients as active people, such as working parents or busy executives, as well as the elderly or homebound, and those who’d prefer to avoid crowded lab waiting rooms.

Physicians will likely become a significant referral base in the future, Cohen said.

Digital diagnostics are also growing more common and accepted. The demands and proof of concept presented by Covid-19 have doubled investment in telemedicine in the last year to \$1.6 billion. Some 40% of health care providers cited laboratory challenges as a concern with growing telehealth programs, according to PwC Health Research Institute’s 2020 executive survey.

As patients and caregivers grew reluctant to make or keep doctor's appointments for fear of contracting the virus, they turned to telehealth and digital monitoring. As just one affected specialty, cardiologists came to rely more on monitors that track and transmit blood pressure, heart rate and a host of other data vital to ensuring a patient's current situation.

Sollis Health, which recently launched its concierge-style urgent-care model in Miami Beach and Surfside, offers a host of in-home diagnostic procedures. It also offers a house call service across South Florida. Doctors will perform basic medical evaluations, as well as blood draws, urine collection, Covid-19 testing and mobile X-ray services.



Andrew Olanow, Sollis Health

BENJAMIN LOZOVSKY

Covid-19 didn't change the landscape, but accelerated pre-existing trends, said [Andrew Olanow](#), co-founder of Sollis Health.

With urban and rural hospitals closing, and facilities overburdened with patients, in-home service providers are delivering more efficient, more personalized care, he said.

“There are relatively simple medical needs that can take place in the home that can relieve the burden from the traditional medical setting,” he said. “In-home care has been accelerated by Covid, and will continue to grow.”