



Understanding the Critical Advantages of Telehealth Adoption



Patient satisfaction levels continue to demonstrate the value of telehealth in omnichannel care delivery

- » 95-100% of patients were satisfied with telehealth when compared with in-person appointments.¹
- » 79% of patients were very satisfied with the care they received during their last telehealth visit.²

Virtual care delivers important benefits to consumers, including:

- » Improved access to care
- » Cost savings
- » Reduction in health disparities
- » Increased opportunities for patients to receive the care they need when and where they need it

Nearly 88% of Americans want to continue using telehealth for nonurgent consultations after the COVID-19 pandemic.³

Telehealth helps reduce costs for multiple stakeholders, including patients, providers and payers

The National Committee for Quality Assurance has noted several studies that underscore the cost savings associated with telehealth adoption:

- » Almost 70% of patients would have gone to urgent care or the emergency department (ED) from March to May 2023 if they did not have access to virtual care options.
- » A study of Medicare Advantage claims data for acute and non-urgent care utilization found cost savings of 6% (\$242 per episode of care) by diverting members to telehealth visits who would have otherwise gone to an ED. The study also found less use of imaging, lab tests and antibiotics.
- » The 20,000 users of MDLive had 17% lower costs when compared with non-virtual care and experienced a 36% net reduction in ED use per 1,000 people compared to non-virtual care users.⁴

Evaluating the impact of telehealth on the environment

- » About 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions are contributed by the healthcare industry, of which the U.S. healthcare system is responsible for a quarter.⁵
- » Based on data from five University of California healthcare systems over two years, telehealth eliminated the need to commute 53,664,391 miles. That equals 113 round trips from Earth to the Moon!⁶

Physician perspectives on the quality of telehealth

- » 88% said telehealth helped improve clinical outcomes
- » 81% reported that telehealth increased patient adherence
- » 82% said telehealth increased patient safety
- » 83% reported that telehealth improved care coordination⁷





Opportunities to improve patient outcomes via telehealth

Many studies report that clinical outcomes with telehealth are comparable or better than usual care and that telehealth improves intermediate outcomes and satisfaction. Areas where telehealth has played a significant role in improving patient outcomes include:

- » Advancing access to remote monitoring options for patients with chronic conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and congestive heart failure
- » Improving communication with providers and supporting access to counseling services for patients with chronic conditions
- » Providing psychotherapy as part of a comprehensive behavioral health plan⁸

Key considerations related to audio-only telehealth services

According to a study published in the *American Journal of Medical Services*:

- » Audio-only telehealth services provided similar benefits and were not inferior to video-based virtual visits.
- » Many study participants shared that they would recommend an audio-only telehealth visit to others and that their medical concerns were addressed appropriately.
- » Audio-only telehealth services further promote health equity for people who are economically disadvantaged, live in rural areas, are racial and ethnic minorities, lack access to reliable broadband or internet access, or do not have access to devices with video capabilities.⁹

Remote monitoring services offer a range of benefits to patients and providers, including:

- » Fewer emergency department visits
- » Improved hospital avoidance strategies
- » Reduced hospital length of stay
- » Increased opportunities to improve or maintain quality of care without requiring patients to travel for in-person visits
- » Greater patient engagement in their medical care
- » Increased ability to expand physician reach¹⁰

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