

Telehealth Frequently Asked Questions

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1) As an independent physician, why do I need to pay attention to telehealth?

Practices that haven't yet adopted telehealth will be facing very real challenges. As it grows in popularity, practices will experience increased competitive pressures, and potentially, a decrease in revenue due to a loss of patients. These pressures will only continue to rise, as telehealth is expected to be a \$9.4 billion dollar industry by 2021.

2) Who should consider implementing telehealth within their practice?

Independent or small-group physician practices who want to achieve the following should consider telehealth:

- Provide high quality care regardless of location (access to care)
- Increase patient convenience and satisfaction
- Facilitate provider-to-provider collaboration
- Increase revenue while reducing cost
- Enhance provider well-being (reduce stressors that can lead to burnout)

3) What problems does telehealth solve for patients?

Busy and hectic schedules can make going to the doctor inconvenient.

It's not uncommon for patients to miss appointments, cancel unexpectedly, or simply put off scheduling an important follow up. Telehealth gives patients another way to get the care they need, so they can maintain or improve their health. On top of that, telehealth is a "must have" for patients who either lack transportation or struggle with a long drive to their doctor's office.

4) What are some additional benefits for providers?

Once you're up and running with telehealth, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Spend more time with the right patients and increase positive health outcomes
- Increase patient satisfaction and loyalty
- Offer service times that are more convenient for you and your patients
- Capture revenue and reimbursements that may have previously been unavailable
- Expand your practice footprint, regardless of geography
- Offer new billable services that can grow revenue with your patients

5) Why is telehealth becoming more of an expectation for patients?

Patients are experiencing a mindset shift to consumerism, including how they think about their healthcare. Three-quarters of consumers say they want the same experience in healthcare that they get from other businesses, according to "The Consumerization of Healthcare" survey by Econsultancy. About 60 percent of individuals under age 55 say they would consider it "life changing" or "very useful" to use video chat instead of going for a routine in-person visit with their provider. An equal number indicate they would be very likely to switch to a provider that offered video appointments and online booking, among other consumer-friendly options.

6) What are some specific ways that providers are using telehealth in their practices?

Providers are using telehealth to:

- Replace phone calls for day-to-day communications with an added personal touch, whether it's internally, between staff, with consulting physicians or with patients.
- Conduct virtual appointments that would normally require an office visit, like post-surgical follow-ups or routine check-ups.
- Answer questions or consult on minor illnesses or injuries that do not necessarily require an in-person visit.
- Review lab results with patients.
- Get expert or second opinions from specialists that may or may not be billable.

In addition, telehealth solutions enable practices to improve care coordination, patient adherence checks and chronic care management activities to support value-based care and population health initiatives.

7) Is it hard to implement telehealth? How long does it take?

Updox provides everything you need to get started with telehealth simply and easily, so you can start offering virtual visits in no time. There's no new software or apps for you or your patients to install—and most practices can use the computers that are already in your office (with a webcam) with no special hardware or setup. Because Updox solutions are so intuitive, many practices are up and running in less than 30 days, making the transition easy and simple.

8) Will I get reimbursed for telehealth? How do I know I'll be able to get a return on my investment?

Reimbursement for telehealth is expanding. Up until now, under Medicare rules, telehealth services are typically reimbursable only if they are provided for beneficiaries who live in certain rural or underserved areas. For non-Medicare patients, reimbursement is not uniform; the amounts depend on the local jurisdictions and what individual insurers will pay. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is finalizing changes that would allow Medicare Advantage beneficiaries to access additional telehealth benefits, starting in plan year 2020. These additional telehealth benefits offer patients the option to receive healthcare services from places like their homes, rather than requiring them to go to a healthcare facility. We also believe that many patients, when given the option, would be willing to pay a "convenience fee" to avoid an office visit.

9) Why should I consider Updox for telehealth?

Updox Engagement for telehealth is unique in the market, because:

- Everything is included, with no special apps to install for you or your patients. This means higher patient engagement right from the start.
- You can use the hardware you already have.
- Communication, scheduling and documentation workflows can be customized based on how your practice operates, so you don't have to do business in an unfamiliar way.
- It's 100% HIPAA compliant.
- Integration with your EHR is easy and can be automated, saving paperwork time and the inevitable errors that come with data re-entry.



How do I get started?

Schedule a demo with one of our solution experts to see how easy it is to get started and increase patient engagement.