

Benefits of Telehealth

by Capella Healthcare



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about some of the main benefits of telehealth for providers and patients using telehealth-based clinical services. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Remote Patient Monitoring
2. Improved Patient Access to Care
3. Comfort and Convenience
4. Control of Infectious Illness
5. Better Assessment
6. Family Connections
7. Decreasing No-Show Rates
8. Improved Clinical Workflows
9. Higher Patient Satisfaction

1. Remote Patient Monitoring

Telehealth allows the provider to check in with patients, in relation to their treatment or condition, without the need to attend a physical appointment. This communication assists with self-management until the next appointment. Patients can send data to the physician regarding vital signs, glucose monitoring, etc. to assist in managing chronic disease and reduce hospitalizations and office visits.

2. Improved Patient Access to Care

Healthcare clinics can now consult with anyone who is connected to the Internet. Those in rural areas can now have access to the best doctors and clinics to treat their illness or injury. There are some services that have 24-hour access and do not require insurance or referrals. It makes it easier for people with disabilities, older adults, people who are geographically isolated, and those who are incarcerated to have access to care.

3. Comfort and Convenience

Telehealth allows people to access care in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. It eliminates the drive

to the doctor's office, parking, walking, or sitting in a waiting room when you are sick. This may mean that a person does not have to take time off of work, travel, or arrange childcare. Virtual visits can be easier to fit into the patient's busy schedule.

4. Control of Infectious Illness

Doctors can use telehealth appointments to screen for potential infectious diseases. It saves sick people from coming into the office and exposing others. Less exposure to other people's germs helps everyone, especially the chronically ill, pregnant, elderly, or immunocompromised.

5. Better Assessment

Telemedicine can give some specialty practitioners an advantage since they can see the person in their home environment.

🔗 **EXAMPLE** Allergists may be able to identify clues from items in the background that cause allergies.

Neurologists and physical therapists can observe patients and assess how well they navigate and take care of themselves in their home. Telemedicine is a good way to get mental health assessment and counseling.

6. Family Connections

When consulting with a health professional, it's always good to have a family member present who can help provide information, ask questions, and take note of the doctor's answers. If that person lives out of town or across the country, videoconferencing can loop the family member in on the virtual visit if the patient authorizes it.

7. Decreasing No-Show Rates

The long distances patients travel from rural areas can result in a significant amount of no-shows at clinics. Clinics end up losing potential revenue plus expenditures on having staff physically available. Studies in the U.S. have shown telehealth can cut no-show rates by up to 50%.

8. Improved Clinical Workflows

Telehealth can increase clinical workflow efficiency. It can serve as the conduit for quicker prioritization of care delivery, triaging each case, and improving communication by capturing, storing, and using patient data for better medical decision-making. The Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) reports that telehealth is a feature of some of the best performing practices in our nation. These tools can help facilitate performance improvements including increasing patient satisfaction scores.

9. Higher Patient Satisfaction

Patients trying virtual visits for the first time cite numerous benefits including:

- Feeling safer since they would not be exposed to sick people in the office
- More convenient than an in-person appointment
- Taking less time (15 minutes compared to half a day with travel and wait time)
- Videoconferencing was more personal than a phone call
- Increasing their confidence and comfort knowing they have online access to their doctor
- Able to get a quick diagnosis

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Support

If you are struggling with a concept or terminology in the course, you may contact TelehealthSupport@capella.edu for assistance.

If you are having technical issues, please contact learningcoach@sophia.org.