

Telehealth in Medi-Cal

IMPROVING ACCESS AND EQUITY

Telehealth is an effective alternative to many types of in-person care. Video and phone visits offer additional benefits to patients, such as the elimination of transportation barriers and increased accessibility to care during the workday. For individuals without internet or with restrictive data plans, phone visits are especially critical. If these telehealth options are removed or limited, patients could suffer the consequences of delayed care, further widening the disparities gap.

Patient-centered care through the convenience of telehealth is the new standard of care across the industry. Ensuring phone and video visits are available to all Medi-Cal patients will be vital to achieving health equity for low-income Californians.

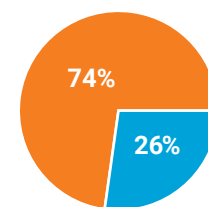
ALAMEDA HEALTH SYSTEM

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, California's public health care systems dramatically expanded their delivery of video and phone visits. From August 2020 to January 2021, Alameda Health System provided an average of 11,628 telehealth visits per month. **In primary care and specialty care, over 95% of telehealth visits were conducted by phone.**

"I have a patient with diabetes and heart failure who used to disappear for months at a time and then show up in the ER needing IV medication and refills - all of which could have been prevented if he had more robust primary care follow-up. Now with phone visits, we're able to talk regularly and have finally been able to provide preventative care. Just last week when he was on campus for his COVID-19 vaccine, he stopped by the lab and picked up a home colon cancer test. Phone visits helped us move from firefighting mode to upstream care and actually being proactive with his care."

DR. JENNY COHEN, PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN AND ASSOCIATE CHIEF MEDICAL INFORMATICS OFFICER ALAMEDA HEALTH SYSTEM

Primary Care

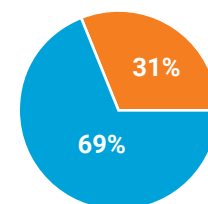


■ IN-PERSON
■ TELEHEALTH

Telehealth

99% PHONE 1% VIDEO

Specialty Care



■ IN-PERSON
■ TELEHEALTH

Telehealth

97% PHONE 3% VIDEO

PHONE VISITS ARE ESSENTIAL

Phone visits have provided a critical linkage to care for our patients during the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to be an important modality once the public health emergency is over. Since video visits are not an option for many patients, maintaining access to phone visits with adequate payment will be crucial for the health and well-being of our patients and communities.

We call on the Legislature and Governor to **pass AB 32**, which will ensure that **all Californians have equal access to care through telehealth.**