

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.

PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

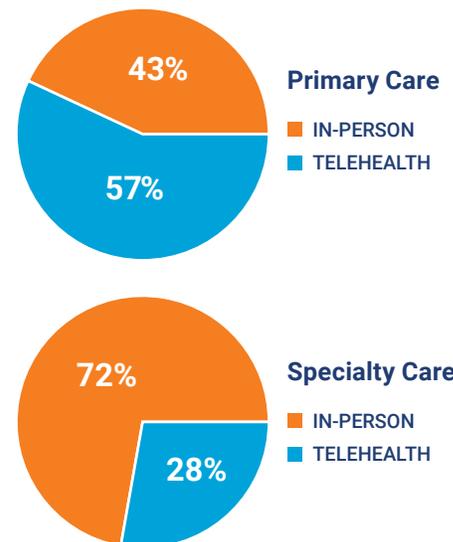
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, California's public health care systems dramatically expanded their delivery of video and phone visits.

Across public health care systems, 339,523 telehealth visits were conducted on average per month between August 2020 and January 2021¹. Of the 10 county systems reporting, telehealth visits on average made up 43% of primary care and 28% of specialty care.

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. According to a recent study by the California Health Care Foundation, 72% of patients said they were just as, or more, satisfied with a phone visit than with their last in-person visit². 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.

Visit by Type



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

1. Excludes Natividad Medical Center. 2. California Health Care Foundation. (February 2021). Patients with Low-Incomes and Their Providers Agree: Continue Telehealth Factsheet. Available at: <https://www.chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/PatientsLowIncomeProvidersContinueTelehealth.pdf>