

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.

RIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY 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, Riverside University Health System provided an average of 10,163 telehealth visits per month.

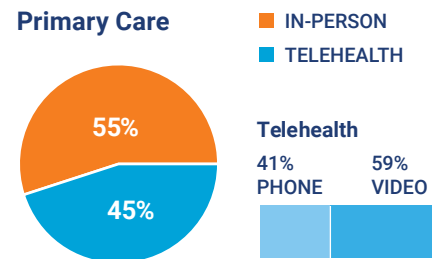
Across primary care and specialty care, over 50% of telehealth visits were conducted by video.

“Our patients with ADHD (and their parents) have responded very well to telehealth visits. They are able to discuss their medication management or side effects without taking time out of school or work to come into the office. It has also been a very useful tool for parents of infants who have a lot of feeding questions. We are able to see the baby is stable and discuss feeding without having to bring new parents into the clinic when things are difficult. The providers like the timeliness of a telehealth visit, while still having the ability to bring a patient in to the clinic, if needed, for a full exam or set of vitals. It is also fun to see our patients’ home life. During this difficult time, mental health check-ins have been a priority and have allowed us to see our kids and offer support.” KATHLEEN LIMA, DO
PEDIATRIC CLINIC DIRECTOR, RIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM

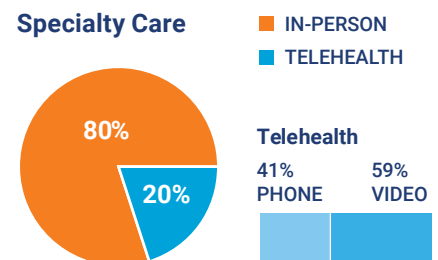
PHONE VISITS ARE ESSENTIAL

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.

Primary Care



Specialty Care



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