

## Patients, Providers, and Plans Increase Utilization of Telehealth Recent Stats

### UTILIZATION

- Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiary telehealth visits increased 63-fold in 2020, from approximately 840,000 in 2019 to nearly 52.7 million in 2020.<sup>1</sup>
- Despite the increase in telehealth visits during the pandemic, total utilization of all Medicare FFS Part B clinician visits declined about 11% in 2020 compared to levels in 2019.<sup>1</sup>
- During 2020, chronic care and mental healthcare were the most common virtual services, accounting for 30 percent and 28 percent of all telehealth appointments.<sup>2</sup>
- Telehealth utilization has stabilized at levels 38X higher than before the pandemic.<sup>3</sup>
- After an initial spike to more than 32 percent of office and outpatient visits occurring via telehealth in April 2020, utilization levels have largely stabilized, ranging from 13 to 17 percent across all specialties.<sup>3</sup>

### PATIENT SATISFACTION & ENTHUSIASM

- 95% of Medicare beneficiaries were satisfied with their most recent telehealth visit.<sup>4</sup>
- 8 in 10 patients said their primary health issue was resolved with a telehealth visit.<sup>4</sup>
- About 40% of patients interact with providers more because of telehealth.<sup>5</sup>
- 83% of patients had a good quality telehealth visit.<sup>6</sup>

### PROVIDER SATISFACTION & ENTHUSIASM

- 80% of providers reported that the overall level of care provided via telehealth was better or equal to that of in-person care.<sup>5</sup>
- Over 70% of providers reported that telehealth had made patient continuity of care better or much better.<sup>5</sup>

### TELEBEHAVIORAL HEALTH/SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

- During the pandemic, clinicians and researchers learned that telehealth-based OUD treatment is just as effective as in-person care.<sup>7</sup>
- Emerging research shows that allowing telehealth-based OUD treatment during the pandemic helped patients initiate and remain on medication treatment, and that these patients stayed in treatment and abstained from illicit opioids at rates comparable to individuals who received care in person.<sup>7</sup>
- Telemedicine has been demonstrated to be as effective in the diagnosis and assessment of mental health disorders in a variety of populations across different settings.<sup>8</sup>
- There is no clear evidence shows that telemedicine increases diversion risk.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/medicare-telemedicine-snapshot.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [Telehealth Use Among Medical Groups Peaked in First Half of 2020 \(mhealthintelligence.com\)](https://www.mhealthintelligence.com/telehealth-use-among-medical-groups-peaked-in-first-half-of-2020)

<sup>3</sup> [Telehealth: A post-COVID-19 reality? | McKinsey](https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare/our-insights/telehealth-a-post-covid-19-reality)

<sup>4</sup> [New Survey: Virtual Care Could Keep Low-Acuity Cases Out of Emergency Department | Bipartisan Policy Center](https://www.bipartisanpolicy.org/new-survey-virtual-care-could-keep-low-acuity-cases-out-of-emergency-department)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.goodrx.com/healthcare-access/telehealth/state-of-telehealth-survey-2021?source=email>

<sup>6</sup> [Telehealth Impact - Patient Survey Analysis \(c19hcc.org\)](https://www.c19hcc.org/telehealth-impact-patient-survey-analysis)

## HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS

- Nearly all (96 percent) employers adopted pre-deductible coverage for telehealth services under the CARES Act and three-quarters (76 percent) prefer to make the provision permanent.<sup>10</sup>
- Among employers that did not add pre-deductible coverage, most either plan to do so later (32 percent) or are exploring whether to do so (61 percent).<sup>10</sup>

## LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

- Going forward, more than 60% of respondents planned on using a hybrid model of care that combines telehealth with in-person visits.<sup>5</sup>
- 8 in 10 patients are likely to use telehealth in the future.<sup>4</sup>
- Over 80% of providers said that they plan to continue using telehealth in the future.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>7</sup><https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2021/12/state-policy-changes-could-increase-access-to-opioid-treatment-via-telehealth>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7861202/>

<sup>9</sup>[Use of Telemedicine for Buprenorphine Inductions in Patients With Commercial Insurance or Medicare Advantage | Addiction Medicine | JAMA Network Open | JAMA Network](#)

<sup>10</sup>[ebri\\_ib\\_542\\_hsaemployersur-14oct21.pdf](#)