

VIRTUAL VISITS

# Telehealth in Times of Crisis and Calm

A guide for pediatricians.

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Parents, guardians, and their children—much like most healthcare consumers—have come to expect an increasing degree of convenience and autonomy in how they experience care. Given this new normal, a virtual visit solution that integrates with your electronic health record (EHR) and practice management (PM) solution is essential to expand access to care and keep patients connected to your pediatric practice. This is especially true for patients who have to travel long distances, or parents and guardians who have to take time off work for a simple follow-up visit.

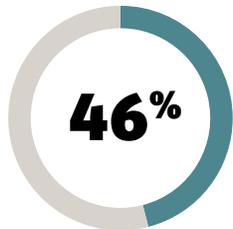
**This guide provides an overview of:**

- Why telehealth is vital to pediatric survival and future growth
- How pediatricians and patients can embrace virtual visits
- Why a virtual visit solution that’s integrated with your EHR and PM is critical to maintain workflow continuity

# THE NEW NORMAL IN HEALTHCARE

Virtual healthcare is no longer just about convenience and choice; it's a necessity to protect the safety of both patients and pediatricians—and essential to financial health.

**Telehealth has become the new normal for healthcare delivery.** While some providers may have been using telehealth for years, for many this is a new way to practice medicine and engage with patients.<sup>1</sup>



Researchers determined that **46% of clinical office visits** could potentially be conducted virtually.<sup>2</sup>

# 1 BILLION

Number of virtual healthcare interactions by end of 2020<sup>3</sup>



# A DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

## The unexpected emotional intimacy of virtual care

*As a physician, I've been talking to patients on the phone for 15 years, yet I am amazed at how powerful the addition of video is to each conversation.*

*People are worried. They want to see a face and talk with a doctor with whom they're familiar. People want to show you what they're thinking through gestures and facial expressions, which makes video a superior medium for healthcare than voice alone. The patient and their parent or guardian can see that the doctor is listening to them—creating a trust that is hard to duplicate on the telephone.*

*During the mandated stay-at-home period, often, family members have been in the room and interjected comments. People showed me their pets. Video allowed for a surprising therapeutic intimacy, different than a medical office, at a time when people are especially vulnerable to feelings of disconnection.*



**Robert Murry, MD**

Hunterdon Family Medicine  
Chief Medical Informatics Officer  
NextGen Healthcare

## How telehealth helps practices

In addition to lowering patient and provider risk of infectious diseases, like COVID-19, virtual visits can help your practice stay competitive. You can:

- Meet with patients through cloud-based access on any device, anywhere
- Provide virtual follow-up visits
- Enable review of lab results, x-rays, and other diagnostic tests
- Access patients with limited mobility
- See more patients without the stress of a crowded waiting room
- Reduce no-shows and appointment cancellations
- Make chronic care management more accessible and convenient
- Conduct medication management and see the prescribed and OTC medications the patient may be taking

# GET YOUR PRACTICE READY

As you expand into virtual care, develop procedures whereby staff prep virtual visits—just as staff members prep in-office visits. Have a staff member call ten minutes before the visit and make sure the patient can connect to their telehealth application. The staff member then completes the usual intake that practice physicians normally would have them perform.

Ideally, your telehealth solution should facilitate this role for someone who assists with the visit but doesn't bill for the visit. After the staff member does the initial call, the physician can perform the virtual visit and then hand the visit back to the staff member to schedule a follow-up appointment or help with required activity, such as laboratory work.

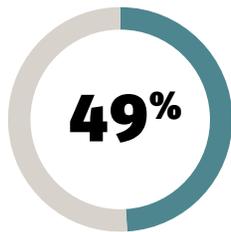


## Tips to prepare patients

- Talk to the parents/guardians of your patients about how virtual visits can fit into their care
- Encourage patients and parents/guardians to write down their thoughts and questions before a virtual visit
- Remind patients and parents/guardians to be in a quiet place during the virtual visit and limit distractions
- Encourage patients to wear comfortable clothing to show wounds or other conditions
- Remind patients and parents/guardians to ensure their device is fully charged
- Keep your visits on track by communicating an outline of expectations at the start of the appointment

## Best practices for telehealth adoption

- Choose a telehealth solution that integrates easily with your EHR/PM—allowing you and your care team to conduct virtual visits—as opposed to a third-party service
- Offer follow-up appointments as virtual visits
- Give patients a convenient option to stay connected to your practice



of consumers would choose providers who offer video visits<sup>4</sup>

Turn phone calls into virtual visits



# MEET PATIENT EXPECTATIONS

Virtual visits not only drive financially sound pediatric practices but build trust and loyalty. Your clients, like all consumers, will increasingly expect to engage with you through safer and more convenient means.

When you expand access to care, you improve the health of your patients and affirm their relationship to your practice. This is especially true for patients who have to travel long distances and parents and guardians who have to take time off work for a simple follow-up visit.

## Benefits of telehealth for patients

Virtual visits are convenient for patients because they:

- Reduce the risk of infectious diseases
- Save time and gas
- Increase access to their preferred provider
- Help manage care during times of crisis

Virtual visits work on any device that connects to the internet: iPhone, iPad, Android, tablet, or computer.

“The experience was a lot easier and faster than going into the office, especially during this global pandemic. As somebody susceptible to illness, this gave me the comfort of speaking to my trusted doctor without exposing myself or him to viruses.”

**Patient**

Tidewater Physicians Multispecialty Group

“ NextGen Virtual Visits was a huge lifeline for our providers and patients during the pandemic, it allowed TPMG to continue to provide the great quality care patients have come to know from our providers all from the safety and comfort of their own home. ”

**Hope Owens, LPN, NCP**  
**Tidewater Physicians Multispecialty Group, P. C.**



# TELEHEALTH REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursement guidelines can change on a daily basis and can vary by state, practice, and payer. Most states have commercial insurance virtual visit laws and many of them mandate that a virtual visit is reimbursed at the same rate as an in-office visit.

A virtual visit platform that's integrated into the EHR/PM allows pediatricians to see the appointment type and collect payments. Any information obtained during the encounter then flows back, or is documented directly, into the patient's chart. This tracks visits for better reimbursement reporting.

Visit [www.cchpca.org](http://www.cchpca.org) for additional information about telehealth reimbursement per state.

# DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY HEALTHCARE ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

## Virtual visits that integrate with your EHR/PM

Virtual visits are critical to maintain care continuity during the coronavirus pandemic. Beyond the crisis, parents and guardians will not only expect the convenience and autonomy they've grown accustomed to, but will want additional mechanisms to engage with their child's health.

Given this new normal, a virtual visit solution that integrates with your EHR and PM is essential. When you add virtual visits to your existing workflow, you optimize your time and enhance efficiency, safety, and convenience for patients.

Connect with patients on any device and maintain productive engagements, whether patients see you in the office or via video. With an integrated solution, parents and guardians can schedule appointments, pay bills, and participate more actively in their child's health.

The COVID-19 crisis has changed the way healthcare is delivered. Integrated virtual visits provide a safe, effective alternative to the traditional in-office visit, especially for routine and follow-up appointments.

## Features of integrated virtual visits

- In-visit features enable a customized patient experience
- Screen sharing capabilities to pass documents and invite a third party or interpreter to the same visit
- Simple, secure, no login required patient access
- Ability to test a device before a visit
- Customizable patient email and text reminders
- Clinical administrator workflow capabilities
- Transition calls to integrated virtual visits
- Patient payment collection process

# BETTER STARTS HERE.

Contact us at 877-523-2120 or [ngosalesteam@nextgen.com](mailto:ngosalesteam@nextgen.com)

Provide the convenience and access to care your patients expect with a top-rated virtual visit solution that integrates with your EHR and practice management solution.

**1** Angela L. Chandler, Jared C. Beavers and Richard Whit Hall, "Telemedicine in Pediatrics: Possibilities and Pitfalls," *Pediatrics in Review* July 2020, 41 (7) 376-378; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/pir.2019-0171>. **2** Infographic. "Virtual Care: Half of face-to-face clinical office visits can be conducted virtually." <https://www.goinvo.com/vision/virtual-care>. **3** CNBC. Forester Research. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/03/telehealth-visits-could-top-1-billion-in-2020-amid-the-coronavirus-crisis.html>. **4** Accenture 2019 Digital Health Consumer Survey

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