

# TELEHEALTH

## Impact Study: Patient Survey

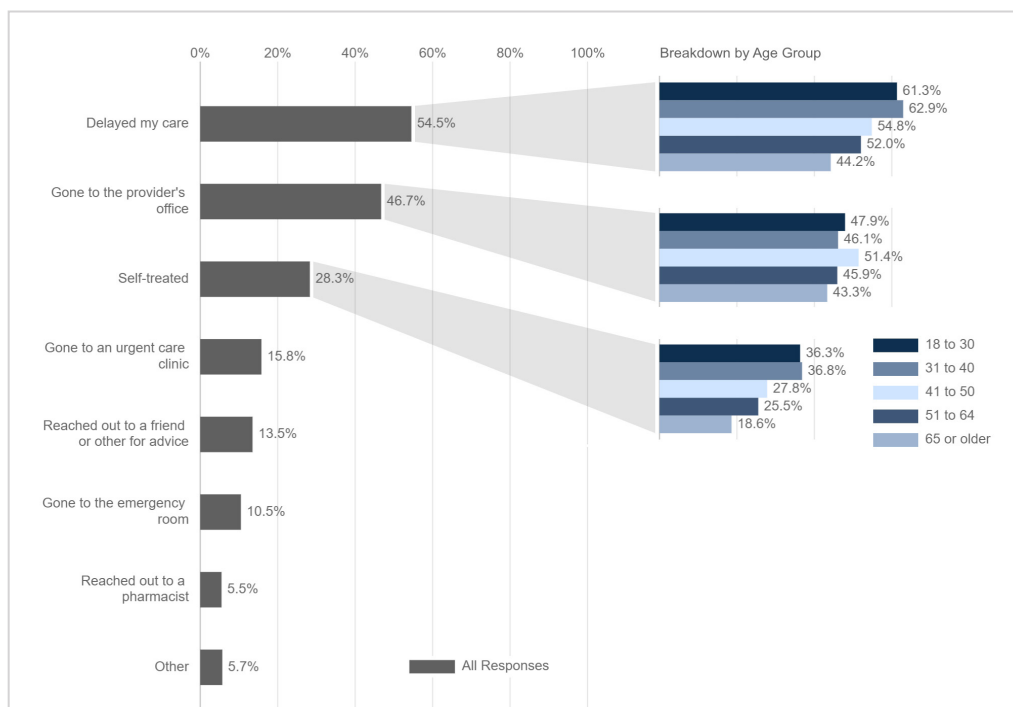
### Executive Summary



Telehealth use, which surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, has provided a way for patients to continue to receive care while remaining safe in their homes. To explore patients’ experiences with telehealth, the COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition recently conducted a survey of 2,007 patients across the country who received at least one telehealth visit during the pandemic. The findings of the Telehealth Impact Study highlight high levels of satisfaction with telehealth services, the impact on the patient-physician relationship, and expectations for future use.

Patients sought telehealth care for preventative, chronic, and acute conditions. It also had a positive impact on patients’ ability to receive that care during the pandemic by decreasing the amount of delayed care and trips to **higher cost visits** to emergency rooms and urgent care clinics:

“During the COVID-19 period, what would you have done if you did not have a telehealth option during this period?”



The survey responses also show that telehealth is positively influencing important dimensions of care for patients:



### MAINTAINING THE PATIENT-PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP AND PRESERVING CONTINUITY OF CARE

- **78%** of patients indicated that they received telehealth services from their own provider
- **81%** of patients felt that telehealth provided them with a sense of access and continuity of care
- **71%** felt a personal connection with their provider during the telehealth visit
- **83%** felt the patient-physician communication was strong



### REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACCESSING CARE

- **76%** of patients indicated that telehealth removed transportation as a barrier
- **65%** no longer had to take time off work for doctor's appointment
- **67%** had less costs related to their telehealth visit vs. an in-person visit



### VISIT QUALITY

- **79%** of patient respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their telehealth visit
- **91%** of patients reported that their provider explained things in a way that was easy to understand
- **88%** of patients reported that their provider listened carefully to their needs
- **81%** reported that the provider was thorough during the visit
- **78%** of patients felt their health concern could be addressed via telehealth
- **83%** reported good overall visit quality

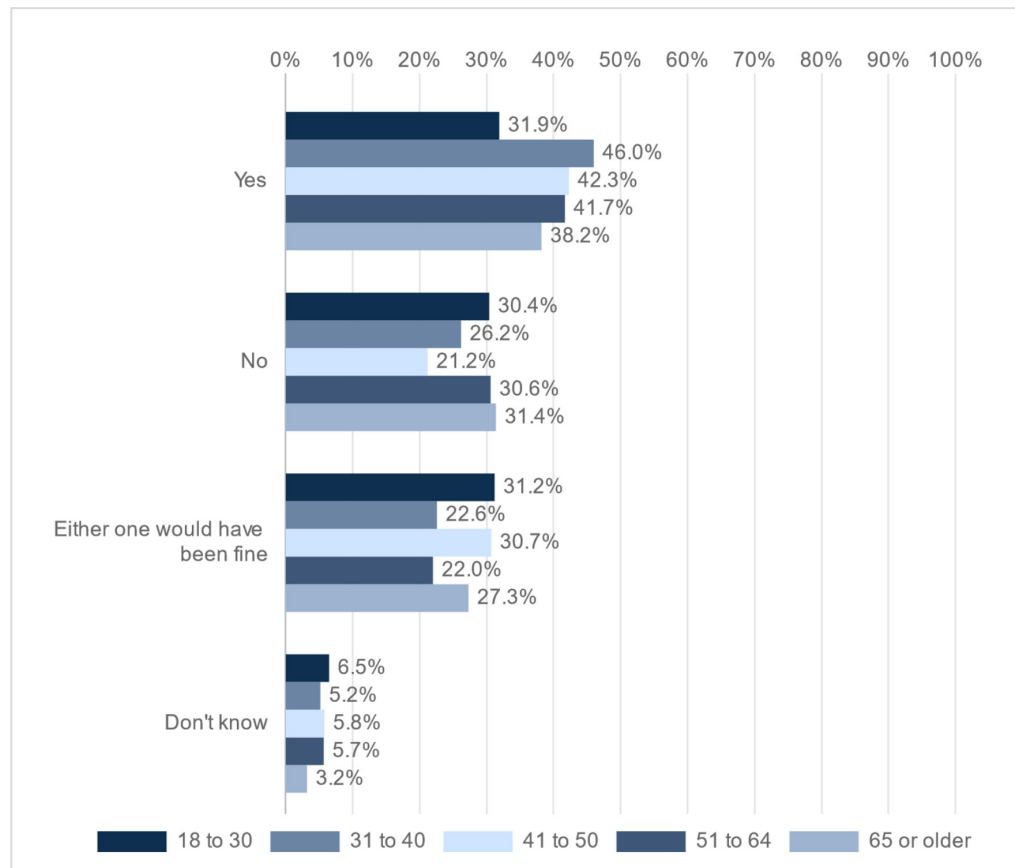


### USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE IMPACT ON PRIVACY

- **84%** of patients felt their information was secure and private during the visit
- **72%** reported that they had sufficient training to be successful during their telehealth visit
- And **79%** found it easy to use the technology

Overall, patients reported positive experiences with telehealth visits and expect to continue to receive healthcare services virtually beyond the pandemic.

**“Thinking about your last telehealth visit, would you have chosen telehealth over an in-person appointment if both required a co-pay?”**



## MOVING FORWARD

During 2020, both patients and providers learned a great deal about what worked and what didn't work in the course of care. The patient survey aligns with the previously reported C19HCC Telehealth Impact Physician Survey, which also reported high rates of telehealth use between physicians and patients with existing relationships. Physicians and patients both identified telehealth's ability to facilitate safe, effective care throughout the pandemic and voiced a strong desire to continue using telehealth into the future. Physicians reported more anticipated barriers to ongoing use of telehealth compared to patients including technology and workflow challenges, patient access to broadband and internet, and patient lack of digital literacy.

This patient survey does have some important limitations. Based on the demographics of the respondent group, the findings may not be generalizable due to underrepresentation of specific gender, racial, and ethnic groups. The respondents were 81.6% female, 14.8% male and 3.6% other/undisclosed. Race and ethnicity characteristics were as follows: 82.5% White/Caucasian, 6.3% Black/African American, 4.8% Hispanic/LatinX, 3.1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.8% Native American. The survey was distributed in English only and via electronic means only. While overall patient experiences with telehealth seems to be positive, there are always opportunities for improvement. We encourage future studies on marginalized and minority patient populations to learn how telehealth is impacting health equity.

## SURVEY DETAILS

The Telehealth Impact Patient Survey was designed to evaluate the experiences and attitudes of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to create an information base to enable enlightened decision making by medical practices, payers, and government regulators in the months ahead as we create a new normal for clinical care.

The survey was developed by members of the COVID-19 Telehealth Impact Study Work Group of the COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition. The survey was distributed through the Work Group organizations, in collaboration with patient organizations including The Mighty and Savvy Cooperative. The survey was managed by the Mayo Clinic health services research team using Qualtrics Online Survey Platform. The survey was open from December 1, 2020 to February 5, 2021.

Researchers and data scientists from the Mayo Clinic and MITRE collaborated to interpret the data and create reports. The data is available to be viewed by patient age, insurance, and rurality.

## THREE-PART C19HCC TELEHEALTH IMPACT STUDY

The patient survey is part of the overall Telehealth Impact Study. For a more complete picture, please see the following on the C19HCC website at <https://c19hcc.org/telehealth>.

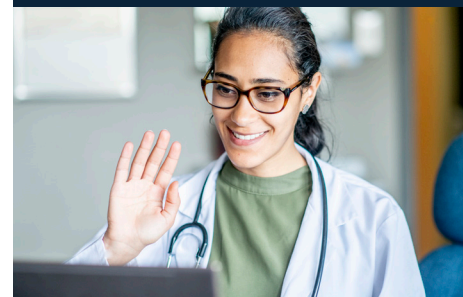
**Claims Data Analysis:** To describe the dramatic shifts in use of Telehealth services during the pandemic, we use insurance claims data—specifically a large de-identified claims data set from Change Healthcare. Change Healthcare provides clearinghouse services to ensure that claims are completed and routed efficiently between providers and insurance companies. By using this upstream data set, we have a better understanding of patient activities across the United States from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2020. Data is available for the U.S. overall and by state.

**Physician Survey Analysis:** The survey, which was distributed across the U.S., was open from July 13 to August 15, 2020. There are many ways to sort the data. For example, you can see how telehealth use differs among medical specialties and geographic locations (urban, suburban, and rural).

**Patient Survey:** See the complete interactive analysis of survey data online.

**If you have questions, please contact** [telehealthimpact@mitre.org](mailto:telehealthimpact@mitre.org).

The COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition includes more than 1,000 private organizations, including healthcare systems, universities, technology companies, medical suppliers, professional associations, and research organizations. All members are committed to quickly responding to the pandemic, preserving the healthcare delivery system, and protecting people across the country.



*The COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition Telehealth Workgroup includes: American Medical Association (AMA), American Telemedicine Association (ATA), Digital Medical Society (DiMe), Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP), MassChallenge Health Tech, Mayo Clinic, and MITRE Corporation. The AMA, while a part of the Coalition Telehealth Work Group, is not a formal member of the COVID-19 Healthcare Coalition.*