

Patients with Low Incomes and Their Providers Agree:
CONTINUE TELEHEALTH



In California, large numbers of patients with low incomes and safety-net providers¹ have turned to telehealth (care provided via either telephone or video) during the COVID-19 pandemic. What has been their experience?

Here are key findings from surveys of California providers and patients, which asked about their experiences with telehealth since the beginning of the pandemic.²

TELEHEALTH USE IS HIGH AMONG PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS.



65% of patients with low incomes who received care had a telehealth visit.



76% of safety-net providers report using telehealth — a more than twofold increase from before the pandemic.

SATISFACTION WITH TELEHEALTH IS HIGH AMONG PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS.



67% of patients with low incomes said their telehealth visit was a better experience than they thought it would be.
64% of patients with low incomes said they had an easier time keeping their appointment for a phone or video visit than they did keeping appointments for in-person visits in the past.



83% of safety-net providers using telehealth consider it “very” or “somewhat” effective for providing care to their patients.

PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS WANT TELEHEALTH TO CONTINUE.



70% of patients with low incomes who had a telehealth visit said that they would likely choose a phone or video visit over an in-person visit whenever possible.



88% of safety-net providers currently using telehealth would continue to do so if payments for telehealth and in-person visits are comparable.

BUT PAYMENT PARITY AND ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY ARE KEY FOR MAINTAINING OR IMPROVING ACCESS TO TELEHEALTH GOING FORWARD.



Only 43% of safety-net providers say they'll continue telehealth if payment for telehealth is lower than payment for in-person visits.

45% of providers with uninsured and Medi-Cal patients say that only some (34%), few (10%), or none (1%) of their Medi-Cal or uninsured patients have adequate access to the technology needed for care via telehealth.

¹ Providers with 30% or more patients who are covered by Medi-Cal or are uninsured.

² One surveyed Californians, age 18 to 64, who had received care between March 2019 and August 2020. The other surveyed California providers (including doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and behavioral health specialists).