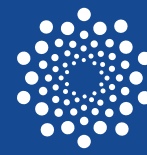


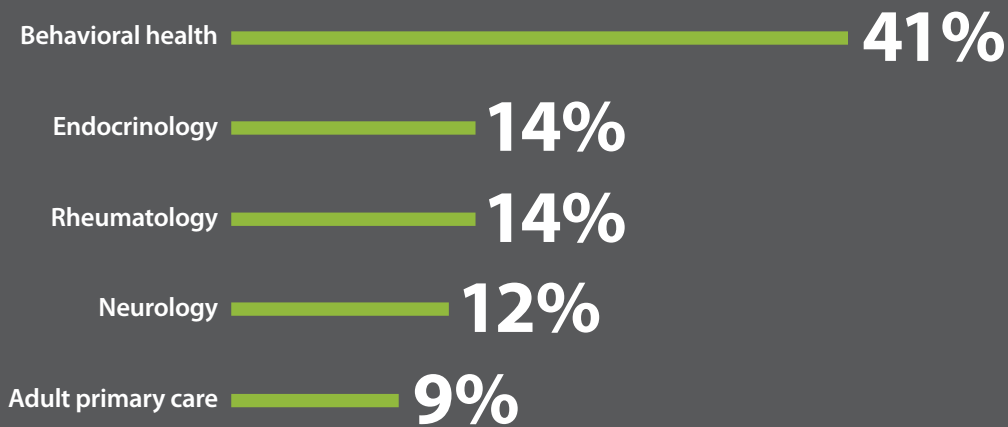
California's Health Plans Play Key Role in Making Telehealth Accessible to More Californians



California Association of
Health Plans

Telehealth use has grown significantly as the COVID-19 pandemic has taken hold of daily life and is helping patients and providers alike.

TELEHEALTH USAGE



Source: Commonwealth Fund study: <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/2020/oct/impact-covid-19-pandemic-outpatient-care-visits-return-prepandemic-levels>

*Data is based on national trends.

BENEFITS OF TELEHEALTH

Efficient and quality healthcare delivery

COVID-19 exposure can be limited by reducing the number of in-person visits

Routine appointments can be handled by phone or live video

Doctors can check in on patients remotely if they've potentially been exposed to COVID-19.

Enhancing Telehealth

Health plans are boosting doctor availability by reimbursing providers at the same rate for telehealth appointments as in-person office visits and waiving cost sharing for COVID-19 telehealth appointments. Here are some specific examples of how health plans are enhancing and expanding telehealth:

- Bolstering telehealth use in the Medi-Cal program by giving \$13.4 million to health providers in the most underserved parts of the state.
- Using interactive video conferencing technology to provide high-speed access to specialist care for members who reside in remote and urban areas.

Prioritizing Mental Healthcare Access Through Telehealth Services

During the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a surge in mental and behavioral health care needs and telehealth has expanded how mental and behavioral healthcare can be delivered during the pandemic. Some examples include:

- Partnering with vendors to provide access to mobile apps to ease the effects of stress, depression, and anxiety.
- Delivering mental health counseling to high school students across the state, including telehealth counseling sessions when school is not in session.

Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans Have Expanded Telehealth Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

More than 10 million Medi-Cal enrollees in managed care plans have easy access to telehealth services.

- One of the largest Medi-Cal managed care plans reported a 400% increase in members using telehealth from March to April 2020.
- One health plan has deployed hundreds of digital kiosks in health centers across the state to provide real-time access to video interpretation services and telehealth.

A recent California law, AB 744, requires commercial health plans to reimburse in-person and telehealth appointments at the same rate. Health plans have stepped up by implementing this law eight months before its required effective date and providing telehealth statewide.