



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TELEMEDICINE VISIT: FOR PROVIDERS

PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL TELEMEDICINE VISIT

To encourage your patients to continue to use your telemedicine services, you must make each telemedicine encounter a positive one. To bill for a telemedicine visit, you must follow the same clinical guidelines as an office visit.

PRACTICE USING THE TECHNOLOGY:

- Test your equipment and virtual platform before you start.
- Have your office staff set up practice calls with patients who are new to telehealth.
- Be sure you have access to your patient's chart during your visit.
- Know how to get technical help for yourself and your patient.





THINK ABOUT YOUR APPEARANCE:

Dress like you would for a regular office visit. Do this even if you are working outside your office or seeing patients outside of clinic hours.

Avoid wearing things that will distract your patient.

Wear solid, neutral colors.

Avoid bright colors and patterns.

Keep your jewelry small.

SET UP YOUR VIRTUAL CLINIC SPACE:

Your patient should see you in a professional place. If you are not in the clinic, choose a professional setting.

For example:

- If you are at home, sit in front of a bookshelf or blank wall rather than on your bed or living room furniture.
- Do not sit in front of a bright window. If you do, you will look too dark and your patient will not see you well.
- Eliminate your distractions. Use a space that is away from other people, pets, and noises.
- Place your camera at eye level and do not move it unless you need to.



AS YOU START YOUR TELEMEDICINE VISIT:

As you start your telemedicine visit:

- Make sure your patient signed the consent form.
- Mute your mic while you wait for your patient to join the call.
- Speak in a normal volume voice. Ask your patient if they can hear you well before you have your visit.
- Introduce yourself as if you were in the same room with your patient.
- If you have other staff with you, make sure your patient knows who is in the room and what each person's role is.
- Ask your patient to confirm their name and date of birth.
- Confirm your patient's phone number in case they have technical problems.
- Ask who is in the room with your patient. If there are other people around, ask first if you can talk about sensitive topics.

DURING YOUR TELEMEDICINE VISIT:

During your telemedicine visit:

- Follow HIPAA guidelines.
- Let your patient know that you may look down during your visit to write notes, but you can still hear them.
- Stay connected with your patient.
- Direct questions to the patient, by name, especially if there is more than one person present.
- Make eye contact with the camera so the patient feels like you are looking at them.
- Avoid movements such as hand gestures, eating or drinking, and doodling. They can be distracting.
- If you need to share your screen, do not leave an image up for too long. It may make your patient feel forgotten.
- Pause between comments in case there is an audio delay.
- Ask open-ended questions, such as:
 - “How are you feeling today?”
 - “What makes it feel better?”



AS YOU END YOUR TELEMEDICINE VISIT:

Provide a recap of your visit including:

- Offer to send the records from this visit to your patient's PCP. They may not want to, but offer anyway.
- Any new diagnosis
- The plan of care
- Any medicines you prescribed
- Confirm your patient's pharmacy.
- Send them information about their diagnosis.
- Explain any emergency plan, including and when and how to contact you.
- Ask if your patient has any questions.
- Consider using teach-back to confirm your patient understands the instructions you gave them.
- Have a closing statement to let your patient know the call is ending. For example: "I hope you feel better. Please let us know if you have any questions. Have a great day. Goodbye."
- Explain how they should end the call first. Then end the call for yourself.

PATIENTS WHO NEED EMERGENCY CARE:

Have a plan for patients who need emergency care:

- Know the location of your patient's nearest hospital.
- Know the emergency medical (EMS) provider for the area.
- Ask someone at your clinic to call 911 while you stay on the call with your patient.



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