

# Patient Perception's Towards Telehealth vs. Traditional Doctor Visits

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## Background

- The COVID pandemic brought many changes, one of which being the sudden widespread emergence of telehealth.
- The number of telehealth visits nearly doubled from 2019 to 2020.
- This change to healthcare delivery has potential benefits and limitations.
- Few studies have been conducted to determine how patient's perceive telemedicine or the impacts it has on their quality of care.
- Does telemedicine have room to grow in the field of health care?

## Objectives

- Assess patients' overall perceptions on telehealth
- Identify quality of care differences
- Identify the potential for telemedicine to grow

## Methods

- Surveys were administered to willing patients in the waiting area of the clinic and pharmacy.
- Survey consisted of 15 questions utilizing a six-point Likert scale to gather responses.
- Results were compiled using descriptive analysis.

### Study population

- Patients who were a part of the Compass Health network, focusing on behavioral healthcare.
- Patients who had experience with both traditional and telehealth visits offered by the clinic.
- Many of these patients having frequent visits for behavioral health conditions.

## Results

- A total of 53 patients completed the survey
- Patients who responded with either strongly agree, agree, or somewhat agree, were grouped together as a general "agree" response, and similarly for a general "disagree" response

Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I prefer telehealth/virtual doctor visits over traditional in-person visits.	15/53 (28.3%)	14/53 (26.42%)	5/53 (9.43%)	6/53 (11.32%)	5/53 (9.43%)	8/53 (15.09%)
I feel less anxious during virtual appointments rather than in-person.	15/53 (28.3%)	10/53 (18.87%)	8/53 (15.09%)	6/53 (11.32%)	5/53 (9.43%)	9/53 (16.98%)
I have an easier time remembering directions after an in-person doctor visit compared to a virtual visit.	15/53 (28.3%)	17/53 (32.08%)	7/53 (13.21%)	6/53 (11.32%)	4/53 (7.55%)	4/53 (7.55%)
Telehealth appointments are more convenient than in-person visits.	27/53 (50.94%)	8/53 (15.09%)	12/53 (22.64%)	4/53 (7.55%)	1/53 (1.89%)	1/53 (1.89%)
Telehealth and virtual appointments should become more common in health care.	16/53 (30.19%)	21/53 (39.62%)	8/53 (15.09%)	4/53 (7.55%)	0/53 (0%)	4/53 (7.55%)
Telehealth appointments allow me to be better at taking my medications compared to traditional in-person visits.	3/53 (5.66%)	4/53 (7.55%)	13/53 (24.53%)	6/53 (11.32%)	18/53 (33.96%)	9/53 (16.98%)
After a telehealth appointment I feel more motivated to achieve my personal health goals compared to after a traditional in-person visit.	9/53 (16.98%)	14/53 (26.42%)	8/53 (15.09%)	7/53 (13.21%)	9/53 (16.98%)	6/53 (11.32%)
Telehealth appointments provide the same quality of care as in-person appointments.	14/53 (26.42%)	18/53 (33.96%)	7/53 (13.21%)	6/53 (11.32%)	3/53 (5.66%)	5/53 (9.43%)
I have better conversations with my doctor during in-person visits compared to virtual visits.	23/53 (43.40%)	13/53 (24.53%)	8/53 (15.09%)	6/53 (11.32%)	0/53 (0%)	3/53 (5.66%)
I concentrate better during in-person visits compared to telehealth visits.	17/53 (32.08%)	14/53 (26.42%)	12/53 (22.64%)	4/53 (7.55%)	4/53 (7.55%)	2/53 (3.77%)
Telehealth visits should cost less than in-person visits.	18/53 (33.96%)	20/53 (37.74%)	7/53 (13.21%)	4/53 (7.55%)	4/53 (7.55%)	0/53 (0%)
Telehealth offers assessments that are just as thorough as traditional in-person visits.	12/53 (22.64%)	18/53 (33.96%)	11/53 (20.75%)	7/53 (13.21%)	1/53 (1.89%)	4/53 (7.55%)
Telehealth offers quicker appointments than traditional doctor visits.	26/53 (49.06%)	16/53 (30.19%)	6/53 (11.32%)	0/53 (0%)	2/53 (3.77%)	3/53 (5.66%)
Telehealth is a valid replacement for traditional in-person doctor visits.	9/53 (16.98%)	16/53 (30.19%)	15/53 (28.30%)	4/53 (7.55%)	3/53 (5.66%)	6/53 (11.32%)
Access to care has become easier with telehealth appointments.	27/53 (50.94%)	15/53 (28.30%)	6/53 (11.32%)	0/53 (0%)	1/53 (1.89%)	4/53 (7.55%)

## Results

- Among the 53 patients, 64% preferred telehealth compared to in-person visits.
- 74% of patients agreed that they received the same quality of care between both delivery methods of healthcare.
- Patients agreed that virtual visits are more convenient (89%) and offer quicker appointments (91%).
- Overall patients agreed that since the introduction of telemedicine access to care has become easier (91%).
- With traditional in-person visits, patients felt they had an easier time remembering directions (74%) and had better conversations with their provider (83%).

## Limitations

- Relatively small samples size, at a single site
- Survey did not offer a neutral answer option
- Age of participants were not gathered in order to study possible trends amongst age groups

## Conclusion

- Telehealth offers the same quality of care with quicker and more convenient appointments, increasing the access to proper health care.
- Some drawbacks to telemedicine include patients having a harder time remembering directions and sharing less information with their provider.
- This study provided data the highlights the importance of utilizing telehealth, as well as its room to grow in the field of health care.