AMA Telehealth quick guide

Updated Sept. 24, 2020

The use of telemedicine and remote care services are critical to the safe management of the COVID-19 pandemic, while also ensuring uninterrupted care for 100 million Americans with chronic conditions. Telemedicine spans a continuum of technologies that offer new ways to deliver care including:

- Real-time, audio-video communication tools (telehealth) that connect physicians and patients in different locations.
- Store-and-forward technologies that collect images and data to be transmitted and interpreted later.
- Remote patient-monitoring tools such as blood pressure monitors, Bluetooth-enabled digital scales and other wearable devices that can communicate biometric data for review (which may involve the use of mHealth apps).
- Verbal/Audio-only and virtual check-ins via patient portals, messaging technologies, etc.

The AMA Digital Health Implementation Playbook series offers comprehensive step-by-step guides to implementing digital health solutions, specifically telemedicine, in practice based on insights from across the medical community. Each Playbook offers key steps, best practices and resources to support an efficient and clear path to implementation and scale.

Our newest Playbook in the series focuses on the implementation of telehealth (PDF), defined as real-time, audio-visual visits between a clinician and patient. We have also created this quick guide for key implementation tips and the latest updates on telemedicine expansion amid COVID-19.

If you are looking for more comprehensive implementation guidance for remote patient monitoring, check out our first Playbook in the series.

Additional resources for implementing telemedicine include:

- AMA STEPS Forward Module on Telemedicine
- Through our recent interactive virtual discussion on the AMA Physician Innovation Network, physicians had direct access to experts gathered to answer questions, share best practices and help arm the front lines with knowledge to act quickly and effectively in providing virtual care and preventing the spread of COVID-19. While this discussion is no longer active, you can still view the transcript (PDF).