

4 tips to help resident physicians become telehealth superusers

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Resident physicians are delivering care more often via telehealth and, in turn, that's had a big impact on their learning over the last two-plus years since the pandemic escalated use of virtual care.

For educators looking to understand how to best equip their residents for the changing care environment, a faculty development course, which offers CME, in the AMA GME Competency Education Program provides strategies and solutions on how to incorporate telehealth into clinical training, while fostering competency development and resident assessment.

The continuing professional development modules, which offer CME, are available to faculty at residency institutions that have subscribed to the AMA's program. Visit [AMA GME Competency Education Program](#) for more information or to request a [demo](#).

Julian Genkins, MD, is a clinical informatics fellow at Stanford Health Care. Dr. Genkins has been a contributor to telehealth education content produced by the AMA, including parts of the AMA GME Competency Education Program module on telehealth training and the AMA Telehealth Clinical Education Playbook. He offers these four tips to resident physicians looking to hone their telehealth skills.

Make your practice well-rounded

Dr. Genkins' first reminds us that the domain of telehealth extends beyond a digital video visit.

"Learning the whole domain of telehealth is important," said Dr. Genkins, an AMA member. "How do I interact with patients over messages? How do I triage? How do I build a system so I am not feeling overwhelmed?"

Residents, he added, should “learn how to work with your team and how to delegate tasks digitally. Learn about things like remote patient monitoring and what kind of access patients have to technology like blood pressure cuffs and glucose monitors. Don’t be afraid to leverage and explore technology.”

Supporting telehealth is a critical component of the AMA Recovery Plan for America’s Physicians. You took care of the nation. It’s time for the nation to take care of you. It’s time to rebuild. And the AMA is ready.

Telehealth is critical to the future of health care, which is why the AMA continues to lead the charge to aggressively expand telehealth policy, research and resources to ensure physician practice sustainability and fair payment.

Make your setup solid

As a resident physician, it’s essential to consider “what is your setup whether you are at home or at the office,” Dr. Genkins said. “Take time to think about how you are going to organize your office and iterate on that. Do the same thing every time. Eliminate the uncertainty around it and make the investment and overhead upfront on a good office setup.”

Learn why telehealth’s here for good—in practice, and in medical education.

Find your footing as a learner

Telehealth is a different method of delivering care and it might require a different approach to growing your skill set than in-person clinical encounters. Some residents believe that telemedicine doesn’t provide as rich a learning opportunity.

“If you are not getting a lot out of learning via telemedicine, I would challenge the resident to think through: Is this because my preceptor is struggling in the environment? And I would challenge the trainee, as a digital native, to think about, how can I carry some of this organizational load?” Genkins said. “How can I come to them and manage up and leverage your skills and comfort with technology so that I can unlock time and brain space for my preceptor to guide me?”

The AMA Telehealth Clinical Education Playbook builds on the success of the AMA Telehealth Implementation Playbook. The AMA also has created the Telehealth Quick Guide with tips and tools for getting started, evaluating and selecting vendors, and workflow and patient care.

Understand the possibilities

Telehealth is a new technology that has room to grow. Because of that, residents can feel empowered about expressing ideas for innovation.

“We are excited by a lot of the digital tools in medicine,” Dr. Jenkins said. “So, if you are not seeing opportunities to learn about this domain, think about innovating in this space. Think about how can I as a learner help my program recognize this gap? How can I engage the experts at my institution to learn from them? Even an hour spent with someone who understands the world of telehealth and the skills that are really necessary can really unlock for you a lot of doors.”

The AMA also helps guide physicians, practices and health systems in optimizing and sustaining telehealth at their organizations through the AMA Telehealth Immersion Program. The program is part of the AMA STEPS Forward™ Innovation Academy, which enables physicians to learn from peers and experts and discover ways to implement time-saving practice innovation strategies.