

# Benefits Insights

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## Encouraging Employees to Use Telehealth Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven just how convenient telehealth services can be. According to a survey from FAIR Health, there was a 4,347% increase nationally in telehealth utilization from March 2019 to March 2020. In addition, many providers and hospitals are encouraging patients to utilize telehealth services instead of coming to the office or hospital for non-life-threatening care.

As COVID-19 cases continue to surge across the country amid flu season, employers should encourage employees to continue or begin to use telehealth services to gain access to quick, convenient and affordable care. This article provides best practices for promoting the use of telehealth services at your organization.

### Educate Employees on Telehealth Services

Some employees are creatures of habit, meaning they may not be comfortable using telehealth services simply because they've never used or heard of them before.

Although it's a newer type of health care service, the modern telehealth platforms are generally user-friendly and operate similar to other video call platforms. Once this is explained to employees, they may be more willing to embrace the offering.

Be sure to provide easy-to-understand educational resources to explain what telehealth is, what it should and shouldn't be used for, and how your health plan treats telehealth services.

### Explain the Benefits of Telehealth Services

There are many benefits of telehealth services, which include, but are not limited to:

- Minimized risk to health care workers and patients by limiting exposure to the coronavirus and other diseases
- Increased services for chronic patient monitoring, follow-up visits, therapy appointments and post-operative care
- Improved health care outcomes due to increased access to care, particularly for preventive services
- Greater ability for patients to follow shelter-in-place restrictions or suggestions by staying home and away from hospitals, except for emergencies
- Increased convenience due to receiving care in the comfort of your home
- Potentially increased cost savings, depending on the health plan

These are just a few of the benefits of telehealth services, and every employee's situation will be different.

### Communicate Its Role in Staying Healthy

As previously mentioned, telehealth services can help employees stay healthy during flu season and the COVID-19 pandemic. Be sure to let employees know that using these services can help them stay healthy and access convenient care during these uncertain times.

For more information on telehealth, contact Relation Insurance Services.

