

AAFP: telemedicine can enhance access to care

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(HealthDay)—Ways in which technology can enhance patient care were shared at a recent American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) State Legislative Conference.

A survey from the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care found that 15 percent of the 1,557 physician survey respondents reported using [telemedicine](#) in the previous year. The strongest benefits associated with technology were improving access to care and providing continuity of care, while obstacles included cost of equipment, lack of training, and potential liability.

Physician use of telemedicine included diagnosis or treatment (55 percent), [chronic disease management](#) (26 percent), and patient follow-up (21 percent). Physicians agreed that technology has improved access

to and continuity of care. It is unclear whether telemedicine has reduced costs. Family physicians should consider telemedicine because retail health clinics are already implementing it. States are beginning to recognize its value and require insurers to pay for telemedicine.

"There is not enough data on whether telemedicine saves money," Megan Coffman, a health policy administrator for the Robert Graham Center, said in an AAFP article. "That is yet to be seen. From a patient perspective, it saves time and money, but there is not enough information."

More information: [More Information](#)

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