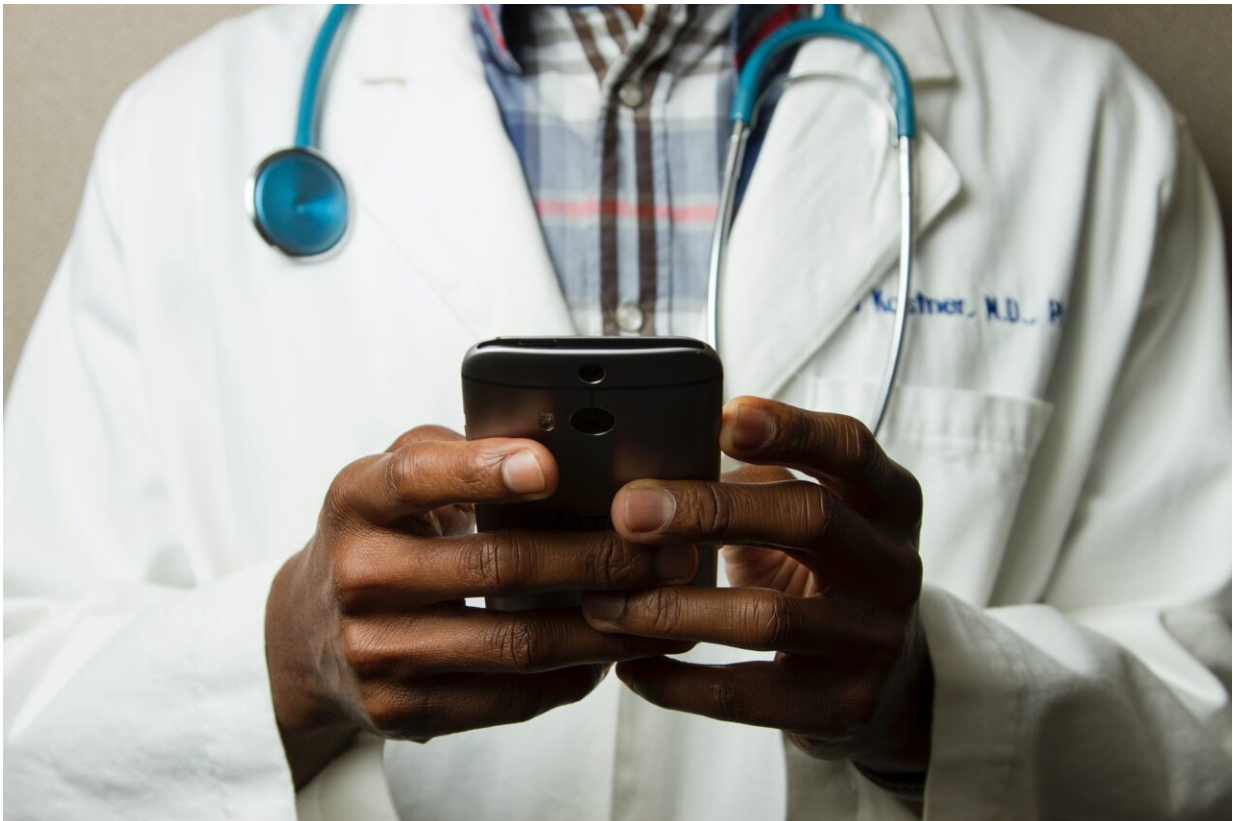


# The importance of telehealth for Medicare beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic

November 17 2021

---



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

A new study published in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* describes the use of telehealth among Medicare beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlights its importance for providing care.

When patients and physicians were separated due to public health concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, Medicare temporarily implemented payment policies for telehealth services on an emergency basis. Survey responses from 9,686 Medicare beneficiaries in the fall of 2020 indicated that more than half (58.3%) of primary care providers provided telehealth services, while only 26%–28% of specialists did. Overall, 38.3% of beneficiaries reported that they used either video or voice calls with their physicians, and only 7.6% reported that they were unable to get care because of COVID-19.

The findings indicate that telehealth provided important access to care in an uncertain, pandemic environment.

"We were surprised that our research found that so many [primary care physicians](#) offered telehealth services and how a change in Medicare reimbursement policy may have accelerated the use of telehealth services," said lead author Hanadi Y. Hamadi, Ph.D., of the University of North Florida.

**More information:** Hanadi Y. Hamadi et al, Medicare and telehealth: The impact of COVID -19 pandemic, *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* (2021). [DOI: 10.1111/jep.13634](https://doi.org/10.1111/jep.13634)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: The importance of telehealth for Medicare beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic (2021, November 17) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-importance-telehealth-medicare-beneficiaries-covid-.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is

provided for information purposes only.