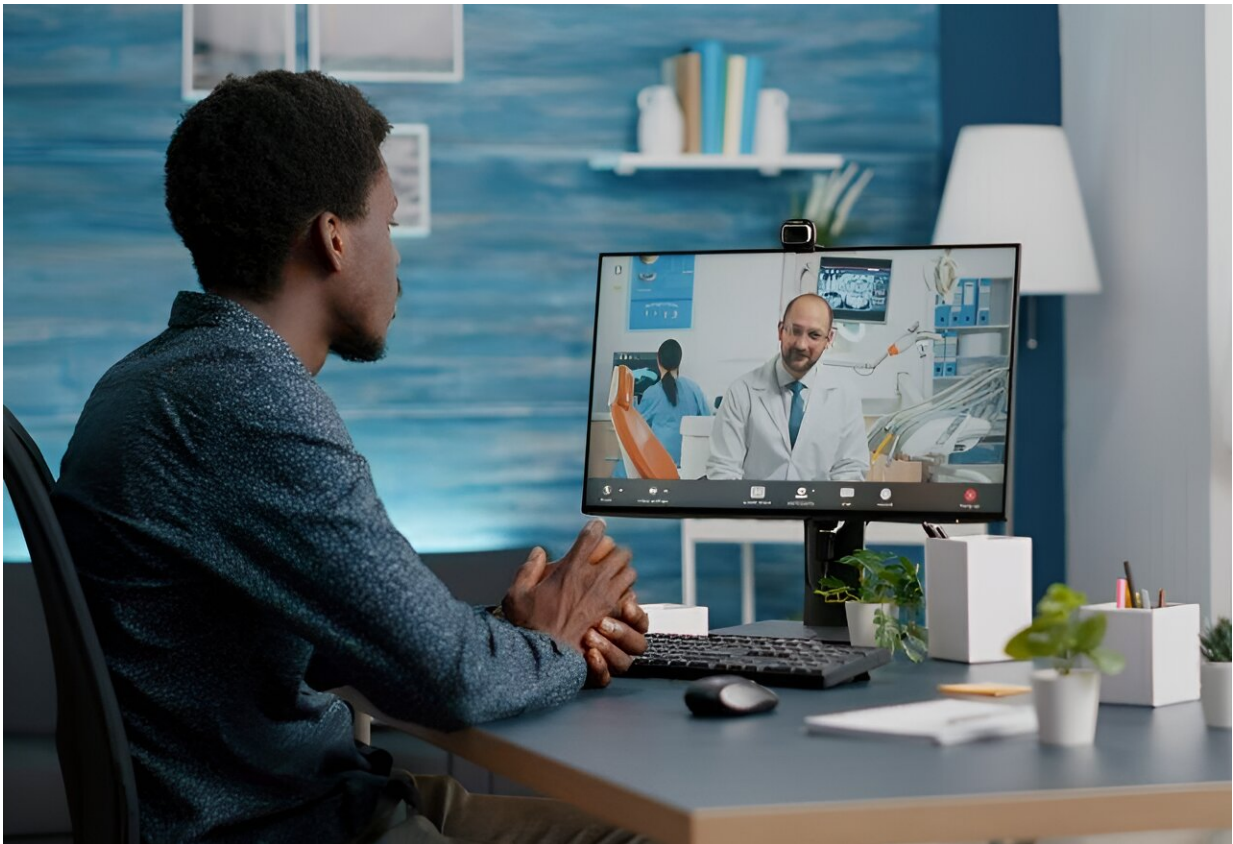


# Primary care loop closure low across all test types

November 29 2023, by Lori Solomon

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Rates of loop closure are low for all test types across all primary care visit modalities but are worse for telehealth visits, according to a study published online Nov. 15 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Anthony Zhong, from Harvard Medical School in Boston, and colleagues examined the prevalence of diagnostic loop closure for tests and referrals ordered at telehealth visits versus in-person visits. The analysis included test and referral orders for 4,133 patient visits from March 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2021, at a large urban hospital-based [primary care](#) practice and one affiliated community health center.

The researchers found that 27.8 percent of orders were placed during a telehealth visit, and of the telehealth orders, 42.6 percent were completed within the designated time frame versus 58.4 percent of those ordered during in-person visits and 57.4 percent of those ordered without a visit. In the adjusted analysis, [patients](#) with telehealth visits were still less likely to close the loop for all test types versus those with in-person visits (odds ratio, 0.55).

"Failure to close diagnostic loops presents a patient safety challenge in primary care that may be of particular concern during [telehealth](#) encounters," the authors write.

**More information:** Anthony Zhong et al, Completion of Recommended Tests and Referrals in Telehealth vs In-Person Visits, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.43417](#)

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