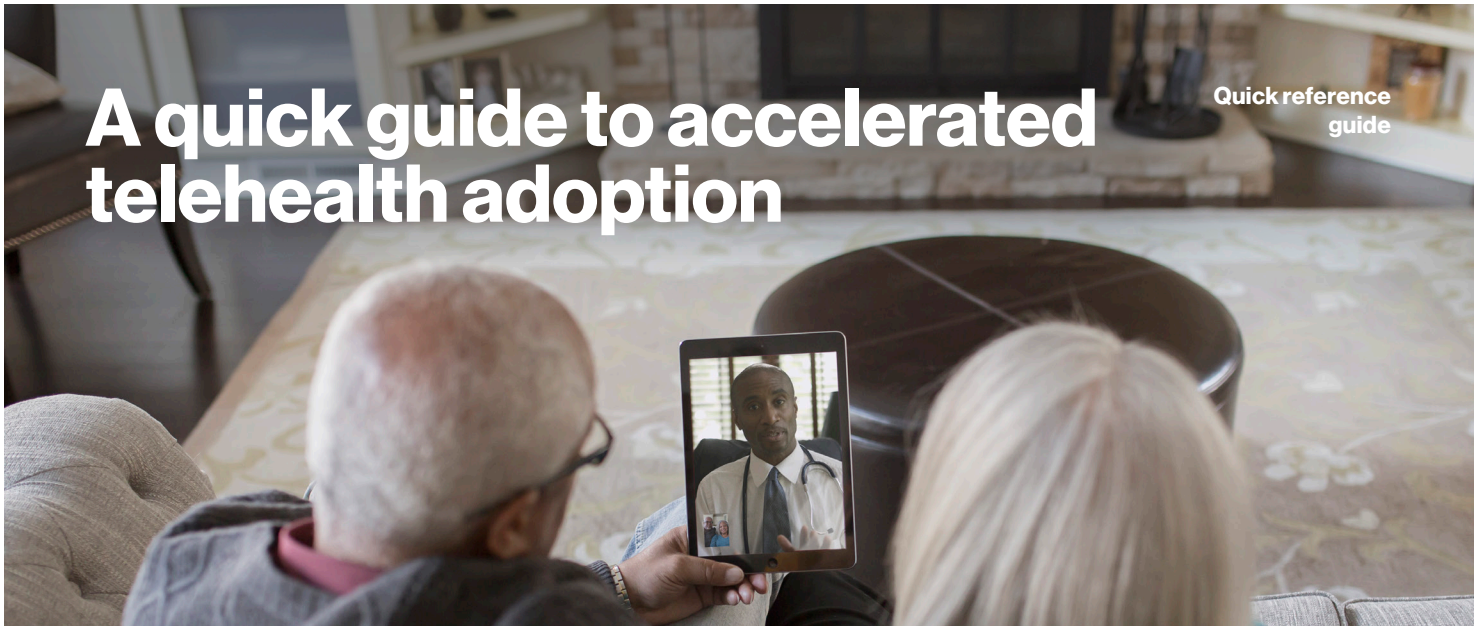
A quick guide to accelerated telehealth adoption

Quick reference guide



The arrival of the novel coronavirus has moved telehealth into the spotlight—right where it belongs.

In the battle against COVID-19, this versatile service delivery model can enable safe evaluation, triage and testing, as well as communication with patients in isolation, to protect care providers and reduce the consumption of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Telehealth can also support continuity of services for providers whose practices have been disrupted by the virus, and it offers a way forward for providers to safely, conveniently and cost-effectively expand their reach and service offerings.

While implementing new services and technologies in the middle of a global pandemic is far from ideal, Verizon can offer considerations and strategies for implementing telehealth services as the industry transitions through three phases of business continuity: react, stabilize and optimize.

React.

Considerations

Rapidly standing up a viable telehealth solution requires triage of immediate priorities and a look at shovel-ready solutions. What are your organization's most immediate needs that telehealth can support?

- Are you looking to offer COVID-19 assessment, testing, triage or care? Or is your goal to provide remote routine care so your patients can safely isolate at home?
- Who are your most vulnerable populations? Do you have patients who require post-surgical or post-treatment care? Who are immunosuppressed or have a chronic illness? How can you best serve them via telehealth?
- Which patient populations might be challenged to participate in telehealth visits and how can you enable them? (Do they lack access to a computer or other video-capable device? Do they have internet connectivity? Do they have the ability to use a device or have a caretaker to assist?)
- Is your remote-access infrastructure robust enough to handle increased usage?
- How will you provide remote monitoring devices to support virtual visits?

Strategies

If you're looking to quickly support COVID-19 testing, triage or care, you can start with the basics:

- Telecommunications services and broadband connectivity services
- Laptops, tablets and smartphones
- Basic web conferencing tools
- Mobile device security

While HIPAA penalties have been temporarily suspended for providers using audio or video communication technology to care for patients during COVID-19, hackers are taking advantage of the situation. The American Medical Association and the American Hospital Association have published a paper to help organizations respond to the rise in cyberthreats exploiting new work-from-home and telehealth models.*

If your immediate needs are to support routine, ongoing or specialized care, you'll want to look at platforms that enable:

- Remote patient monitoring
- Synchronous video consultation
- Patient-reported outcomes
- Store-and-forward services, such as asynchronous transfer of patient images and data

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Stabilize.

Considerations

As the dust has settled, it's time to assess what's working with your emergent telehealth deployment and what isn't. Stabilizing your telehealth practice will mean identifying integration gaps and challenges, as well as adjacent capabilities that could add value to your deployment as operations return to a new normal.

- Do you have concerns about data security?
- What additional collaboration abilities are needed?
- What have been the barriers to utilization, for both providers and patients?
- Are your core business applications, such as appointment management, laboratory information management or billing, cloud ready? Or are you relying on less-than-optimal solutions as a workaround?
- Are you ready to expand to additional use cases?

Strategies

It's critical to wrap multiple security measures around any form where patient data has been captured through text, video or voice. Organizations should ensure that all telehealth solutions are HIPAA compliant and feature end-to-end encryption.

- To provide the best possible patient experience, information systems should securely work with collaborative tools that leverage voice, video, messaging and applications so all users—patients, providers and care teams—can click, connect and collaborate from anywhere, via any device
- Patients without internet connectivity could be provided with hotspots, tablets or smartphones to enable videoconferencing and remote monitoring services

Optimize.

Considerations

This is the time to create a long-term road map for your telehealth utilization—and possible expansion—to help make your vision a reality. What worked in the early response stage may not be viable for provision of services moving forward. How do you envision virtual care as part of your organizational footprint in the future?

- Is your communication and collaboration platform scalable? Is your network?
- How will you address interoperability between key systems (electronic health records [EHR], quality and core measures, post-acute care [PAC] systems, payer systems, e-commerce capabilities, etc.)?
- What's the right mix of onsite and remote care, and how can you optimize scheduling to support both?
- What use cases will most likely shape your further adoption and integration of telehealth into your mainstream patient workflows?
- How can your telehealth practice be expanded to address specific populations or patient needs?
- How could you ingest, integrate and utilize a wider variety of patient data, such as from fitness devices or connected scales?

Strategies

- Telehealth solutions equipped with chatbot capabilities driven by artificial intelligence (AI) can help busy care providers make quick assessments
- Specialists, like dermatologists, can utilize enhanced features to diagnose conditions with the same level of precision they can achieve in person
- Follow-up care and long-term care plans utilizing next-generation connected devices, like sensor-based pill bottles and remote stethoscopes, can help ensure that patients are following prescribed care routines

Remember, connected devices require a strong network on both ends and proper integrations so that providers can consistently see and act on resulting data. Many organizations are choosing to outsource security and network operations to help lift the burden off local IT teams.

We're here. And we're ready.

Verizon is committed to responsive support of our customers facing the challenges of COVID-19 and the immediate need for telehealth adoption. While we have solutions that can support a quick and seamless deployment, we are equally committed to partnering with you to expedite application for the telehealth funding available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economics Security (CARES) Act and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), so you can focus on your core services and front line patient care.

In addition to core telehealth technology, Verizon offers the following solutions for healthcare:

- Business continuity ›
- Contact center ›
- Customer experience (CX) and customer experience design (CXD) ›
- Cyber Risk Monitoring ›
- Internet of Things › (IoT) and IoT Security Credentialing ›
- Mobile security ›
- One Talk ›
- Threat monitoring › and Managed Security Services ›
- Unified Communications and Collaboration as a Service (UCCaaS) ›

Why Verizon for telehealth?

- **A network leader.** Award-winning wireless network, reliable IP and fiber infrastructure
- **Technology partner ecosystem.** Deep expertise in machine learning, AI, analytics optimization and more
- **IT innovation.** Leading the journey to 5G and advancing the agenda on IoT integration for healthcare organizations
- **Threat intel**. Analysis of over 345,000 security incidents and 12,000 data breaches

Technology requirements for effective telehealth communications

- A scalable network enabled by automation, such as software-defined networking (SDN) and virtualized network services (VNS), that can flex to support new usage patterns with work shifting outside of offices and enable application availability prioritization
- Cloud-ready applications for collaboration, core operations and support
- Secure mobile connectivity to access those applications as well as the corporate WAN (for those that are not cloud-enabled)
- End-to-end monitoring of network performance to maintain control, usability and security
- Zero-trust security implementations that strengthen the protection of sensitive information outside of physical offices, including mobile security and device management capabilities
- A resilient end-user support model and supply chain that can deal with spikes in demand, both in terms of calls for help and the need for laptops, tablets or other mobile devices

Learn more:

For more information about our solutions for healthcare, contact your Verizon Business Account Manager.

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* www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-04/cybersecurity-work-from-home-covid-19.pdf