



**4** THINGS  
*primary care*

**PHYSICIANS  
NEED**

to know about

**Telemedicine**

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Rising healthcare costs, increased overhead expenses and government-mandated access to healthcare are driving demand for telemedicine. Another key factor to the equation is the physician shortage. According to a recent study, the shortfall of primary care physicians over the next decade will be somewhere between 14,900 to 35,600<sup>1</sup>.

These challenges call for better technology and new approaches to treatment. In the words of digital medicine expert Eric Topol, “Medicine is about to go through its biggest shakeup in history.”<sup>2</sup>

Increasingly, the healthcare industry, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), and state Medicaid programs are looking to telemedicine fix the gaps. As a result, current trends suggest that virtual home visits will be routine in the near future.

Here are 4 things you need to know about telemedicine.

“Medicine is about to go through its biggest shakeup in history.”

-Eric Topol





## #1 The demand & forecast for telemedicine is hot.

How hot, exactly? Telemedicine is expected to be commonplace within the next few years, especially with the shift toward value-based care. By the end of 2020, telemedicine is forecasted to be worth \$34 billion globally.<sup>3</sup>

The industry predicts that as patients become more proactive in their healthcare delivery choices, use of telehealth solutions will increase from an estimated 250,000 patients in 2013 to an estimated 3.2 million in 2018.<sup>4</sup>

Recent surveys by Cisco already show that 70% of patients are comfortable communicating with their healthcare providers online and 80% have no qualms about submitting their medical information online.<sup>5</sup> In fact, one study revealed

that 84% of patients aged 18-34 actually prefer consultation through a mobile device to traditional face-to-face consultations.<sup>6</sup>

**84% of patients  
between the age of 18-34  
prefer telemedicine  
than face-to-face.**

Now, you may think that only millennials would be comfortable with healthcare services delivered via video conference. Nope. PwC's Health Research Institute found that 72% of patients ages 18 to 44 and 43% of patients 45 and older would be willing to consult with a provider virtually instead of in person.<sup>7</sup>

It makes sense. After all, how many grandparents do you know who regularly FaceTime or Skype with their grandchildren? And many of your patients also likely use video conferencing at work instead of traveling for business or even commuting to the office. Two-way video is becoming increasingly common.

Patients will want that same convenience for their healthcare too. AdvancedMD makes it easy for providers to satisfy these demands. From any computer or tablet, patients can easily join an Telemedicine appointment by entering the session ID that is automatically emailed during scheduling. It's like a virtual house call.

# #2 Telemedicine makes it easier for patients to receive healthcare services.

Telemedicine can help you expand your care to rural, housebound, and elderly patients with limited mobility. And it also provides valuable assistance for patients who may forgo health care so they don't have to use precious paid time off (PTO) from work.

Another way telemedicine makes a real difference is continuity of care, particularly for chronic conditions. If you are a primary care provider, you know firsthand the challenges patients face in coming in for weekly or other regularly scheduled appointments. In turn, you may only offer a handful of evening or Saturday appointments, which get booked in a snap.

Compared to a phone consultation, Telemedicine creates a highly personal & collaborative patient experience.

Research consistently shows that patients give high marks for their virtual health visits.<sup>8</sup> With the limitations of geographic boundaries and commute time removed, patient experience inevitably improves. Patients can skip the hassles and costs of driving, bussing or Ubering to your office and sitting in a waiting room where they feel like just another number. Instead, they can talk from the comfort of home, hotel, college dorm room, even Timbuktu.

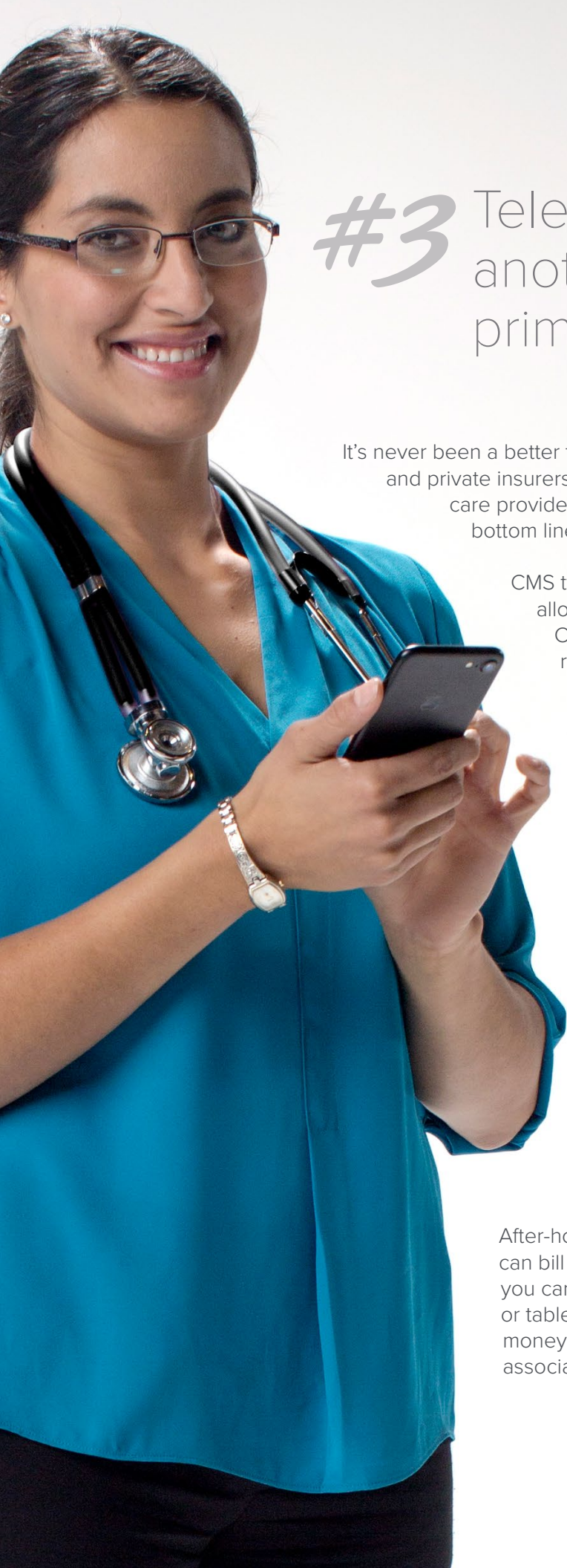
Consider the AdvancedMD solution that uses state-of-the-art two-way HD video that will leave you and your patients awe inspired. Telemedicine promotes a feeling of personalized care for all parties, even extended family members who are engaging in an elderly parent's care. Compared to a phone consultation, the video conferencing technology creates a highly personal and collaborative patient experience.

Telemedicine makes it easier for patients to get quality care, regardless of geography. Virtual home visits provide faster time to care and faster time to diagnosis and treatment, which both improves health outcomes and lowers treatment costs. It's care without boundaries.



Telemedicine makes a real difference in continuity of care, especially for elderly patients or those who live in rural areas.





## #3 Telemedicine offers another revenue stream for primary care providers.

It's never been a better time to add telemedicine to your practice. In fact, CMS and private insurers are recognizing that telemedicine can address primary care provider shortages – especially in rural areas – and benefit the bottom line.

CMS typically covers telemedicine for rural areas. Now CMS also allows Medicare Advantage (managed care) and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) to use telehealth services regardless of geography.

All 50 states  
cover Medicaid for  
telemedicine services.

Another revenue benefit of telemedicine is a reduction in cancellations. The convenience of telemedicine eliminates many of the cancellations and no-shows for patients who can't get to the office because of a big snowstorm, an inability to get a ride, a sick child, and more. In fact, a VA study found that patients who received care through telemedicine had fewer cancellations and no-shows than patients with in-office appointments.<sup>9</sup>

After-hour calls can be turned into virtual telemedicine visits so you can bill for your time. Because Telemedicine is cloud accessible, you can be anywhere you need to be, at anytime. A computer or tablet is all you need. This flexibility empowers you to save money because you won't have to deal with the overhead costs associated with on-site visits.

# #4 Telemedicine should be integrated with your scheduling, EHR & billing office software suite.

Practices can leverage telemedicine to its maximum benefit when it's integrated with your practice management and EHR. For example, Telemedicine makes it easier than ever to add session notes to your patient charts. The software allows you to capture screenshots from the video feed and then automatically adds the image files to the patient notes in the EHR.

As an integrated technology, Telemedicine also relieves front office, billing and claims management headaches. You get a central location for appointment management and scheduling. Creating a telemedicine appointment is as simple as selecting a checkbox. This action automatically triggers appointment reminders that are emailed to the patient with easy-to-follow login instructions. Providers can easily capture charges on the iPad, desktop or their laptop. All charges are then available in real-time to

billing staff. No lost superbills means no lost (or forgotten) charges. And more money is a great thing! With Telemedicine anywhere you are, any device you use, you have complete access to patients and all your clinical and demographic information.

Despite the benefits of an all-in-one system, some medical practices choose to go with an à la carte approach. While the individual products they purchase may be high quality, the lack of integration seriously reduces workflow

efficiency and can prevent patient communication automation. As a result, this approach often leads to frustrating logjams and obstacles.

For this reason, savvy providers prefer the time- and money-saving benefits of an integrated system. When used in harmony with your other office software, the return on investment from telemedicine is significant enough that Becker's Hospital Review proclaims that the "cost benefits of telehealth can't be ignored."<sup>10</sup>





# Conclusion

The best telemedicine systems act like a virtual clinic and are integrated into a cloud-based electronic health records (EHR) system. All you need is a computer with a webcam and an internet connection.

And because Advanced Telemedicine is cloud-based, you won't rack up expenses on costly software, servers, or IT services. This HIPAA-compliant system works seamlessly with Advanced EHR.

The telemedicine appointment dashboard is intuitive, so there's no dreaded learning curve. Basically, if your staff can upload photos to their Instagram, they can manage this software. Best of all, you'll enjoy a

single location to review the status of all your telemedicine appointments. It just takes a click to launch and end two-way HD video sessions. It's that easy.

Telemedicine simplifies the billing and claim process too. It automatically generates copay charges and claims for the visit. Military-grade encryption and automatic hourly data backups keep patient data safe and secure.

The best  
telemedicine  
systems act like  
a virtual clinic.  
No costly IT  
services needed.

Now you can attract and engage patients with virtual healthcare, especially in rural areas, with our simple and integrated telehealth technology.

See how easily you can care without boundaries. Find out how.

<sup>1</sup>New Research Confirms Looming Physician Shortage. April 5, 2016. [https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/newsreleases/458074/2016\\_workforce\\_projections\\_04052016.html](https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/newsreleases/458074/2016_workforce_projections_04052016.html)

<sup>2</sup>How Technology Is Transforming Health Care. July 12, 2013. <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/hospital-of-tomorrow/articles/2013/07/12/how-technology-is-transforming-health-care>

<sup>3</sup>Mordor Intelligence. "Global Telemedicine Market: Growth, Trends, and Forecasts (2015-2020)". August 2015.

<sup>4</sup>American Hospital Association. "The Promise of Telehealth for Hospitals, Health Systems and Their Communities." Trend Watch. January 2015. P. 6.

<sup>5</sup>Insight Express. "Cisco Customer Experience Report for Healthcare." February 2013.

<sup>6</sup>Mordor Intelligence. "Global Telemedicine Market: Growth, Trends, and Forecasts (2015-2020)". August 2015.

<sup>7</sup>PwC's Health Research Institute. "Top Health Industry Issues of 2016: Thriving in the New Health Economy." December 2015. P. 7.

<sup>8</sup>Richardson, Lisa K. et al. "Current Directions in Videoconferencing Tele-Mental Health Research." *Clinical Psychology: a Publication of the Division of Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association* 16(3), 2009. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2850.2009.01170.x>

<sup>9</sup>Guest, D.K. et al. "Telemedicine versus Face-to-Face Patient Care: A Comparison of Treatment Avoidance in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Patients." Presented at Veterans Affairs Health Services Research and Development Service National Meeting. February 2011. <http://www.hsrp.research.va.gov/meetings/2011/abstract-display.cfm?RecordID=65>

<sup>10</sup>10 Biggest Technological Advancements for Healthcare in the Last Decade. January 28, 2014. <http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/healthcare-information-technology/10-biggest-technological-advancements-for-healthcare-in-the-last-decade.html>