VIRTUAL PATIENT CARE IN THE AMBULATORY SETTING

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Objectives

- Describe virtual care including the various virtual care modalities commonly used in Ontario.
- Differentiate between patient encounters that may and may not be amenable to virtual care
- Describe the components of an effective virtual visit in primary care and specialist care settings.
- Describe the key components to presenting cases to a preceptor effectively in virtual care

What is Virtual Care

Any interaction between patients and/or members of their circle of care, occurring remotely, using any forms of communication or information technologies, with the aim of facilitating or maximizing the quality and effectiveness of patient care.[1]

Why Use Virtual Care

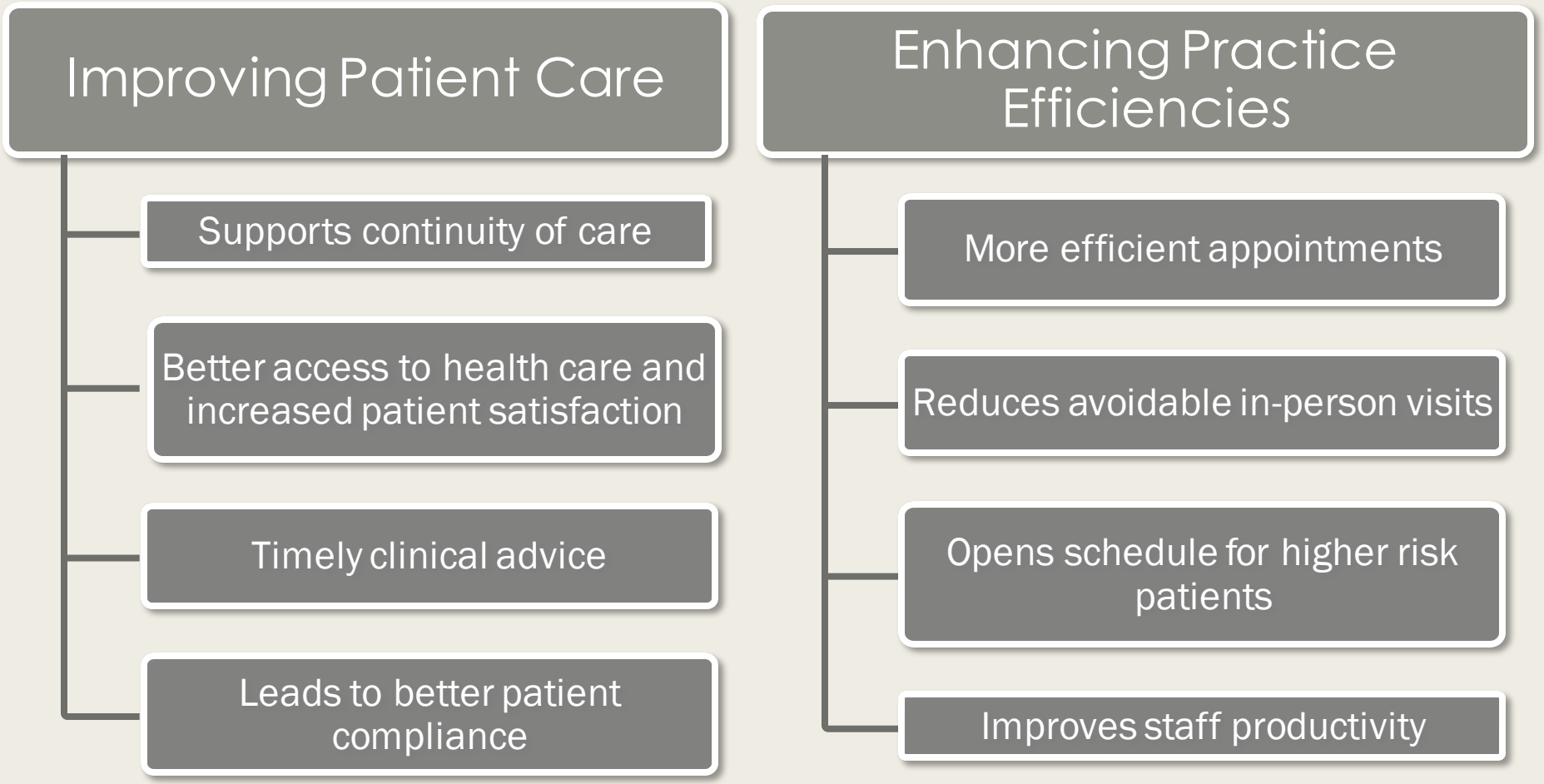
Cost savings

Patient interest

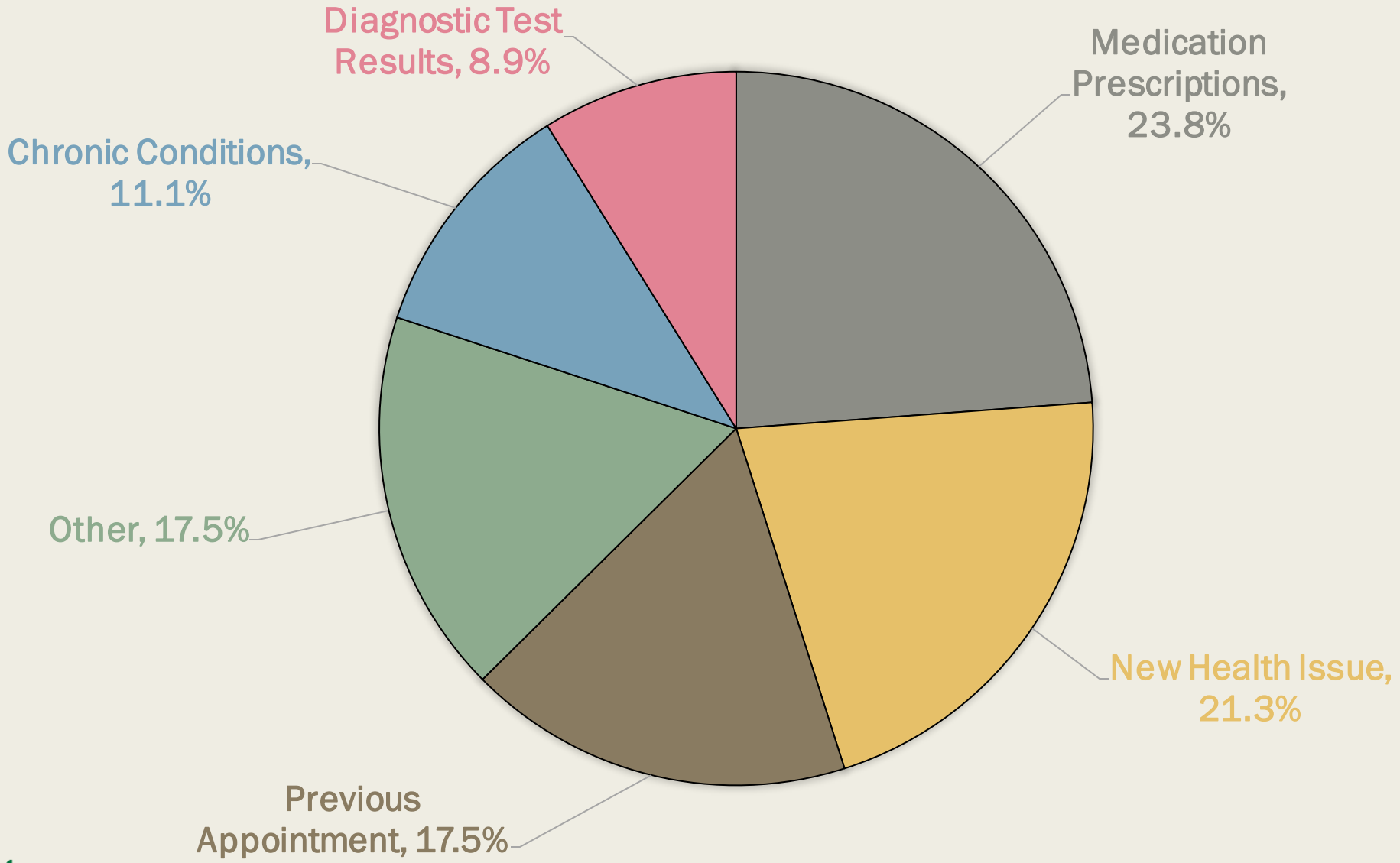
Improved Access/Convenience

Pandemic

The Benefits of Virtual Care



Patient Reason for Virtual Visit



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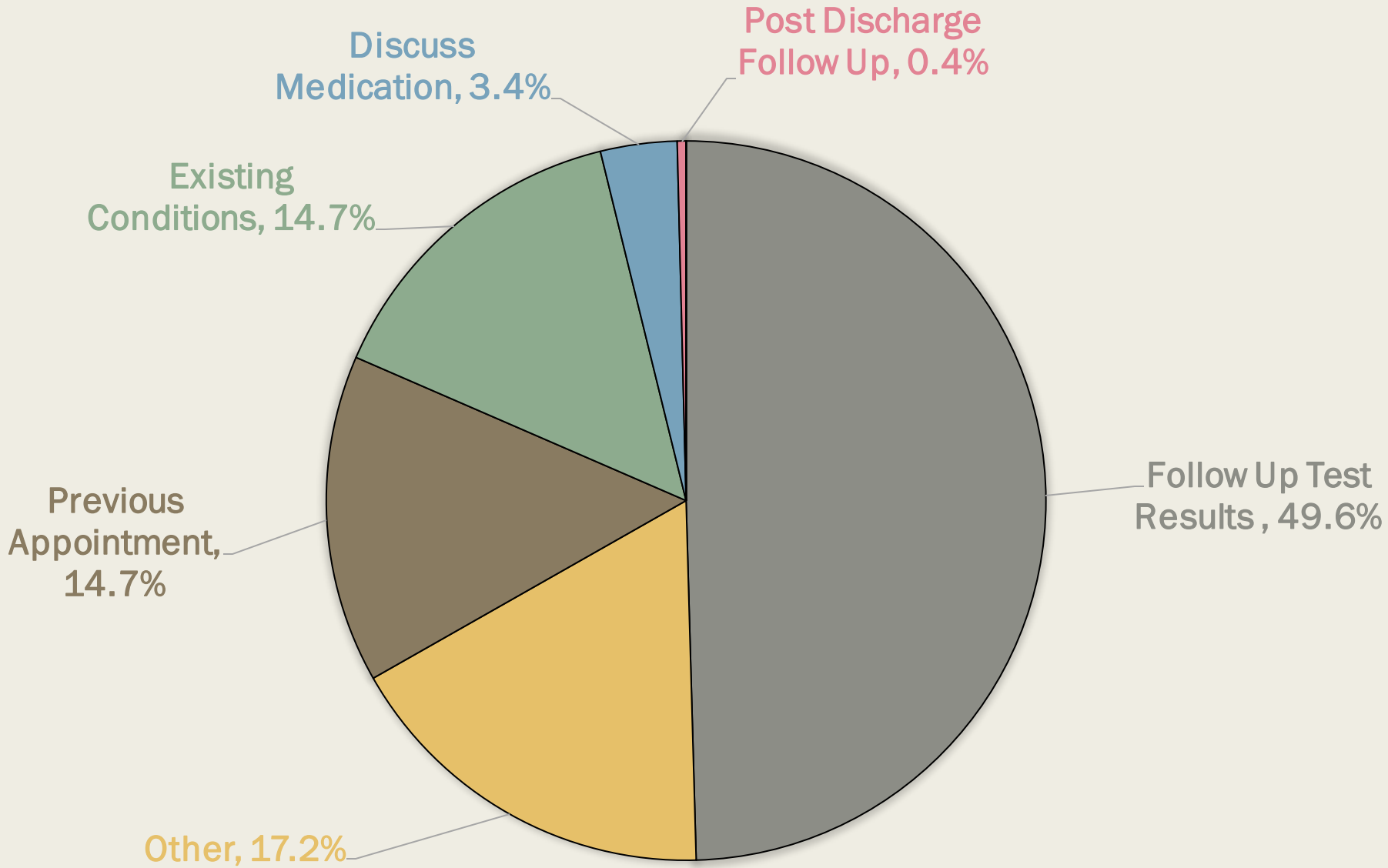
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

n=21,579

Provider Reason for Requested Visit



n=5,822

Virtual Visits during COVID-19

Possible use cases for virtual visit related to COVID-19 may include:

Patients in self-isolation and Patients at high risk

Patients who are worried but well

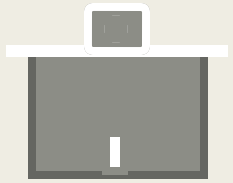
Many regular appointments

E.g.:

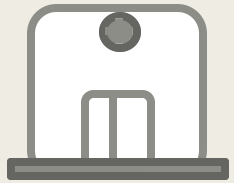
- ✓ Medication renewals
- ✓ Follow-up on lab or imaging results
- ✓ Rash or skin conditions
- ✓ Chronic conditions
- ✓ Health education
- ✓ Mental health follow up

Patient Perspective

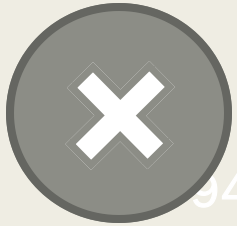
If a virtual visit had not been available…



4.4% of patients would have visited the **emergency department**



11.2% of patients would have gone to a **walk-in clinic**



3.7% of patients would have done **nothing**

94.4
%

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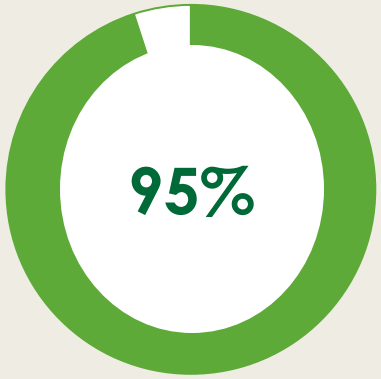
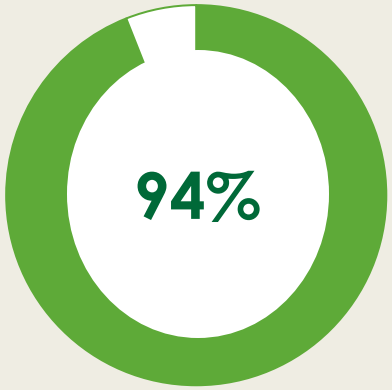
n=1,479

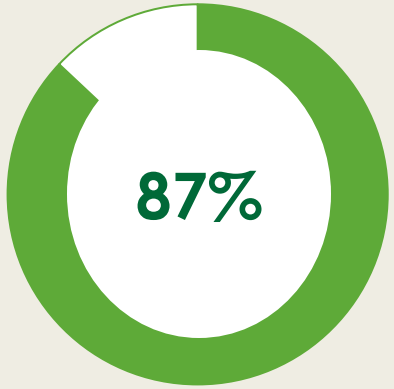
Patient Perspective



Saved Time



Provided convenient access to care



Platform was intuitive and easy to use

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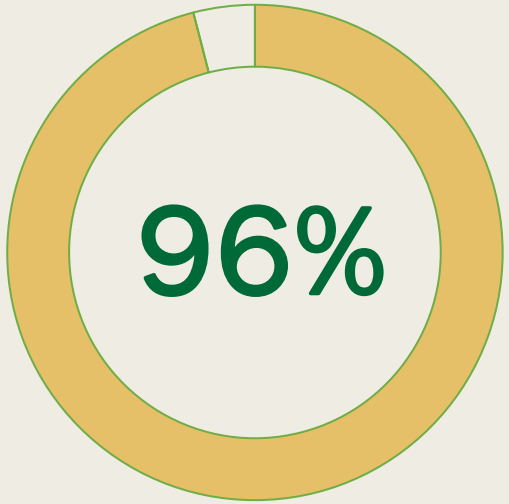
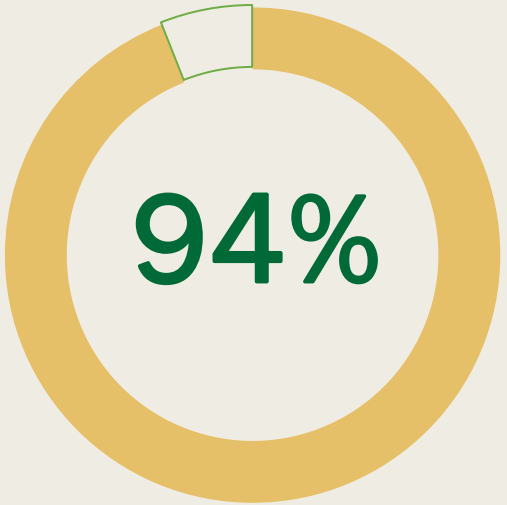
n=1,497

Patient Perspective



… of patients would ***recommend the solution*** *to friends and family*



… of patients indicated that their virtual visit was ***better or the same*** *as an in-person visit*

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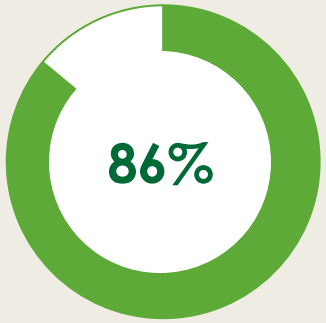
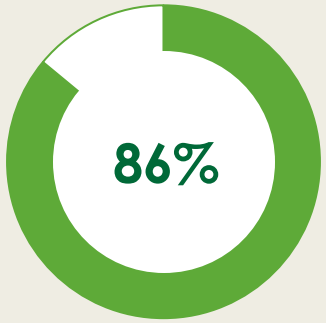
n=1,497

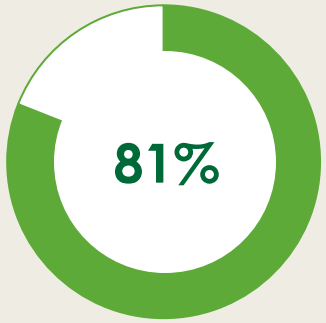
Provider Perspective



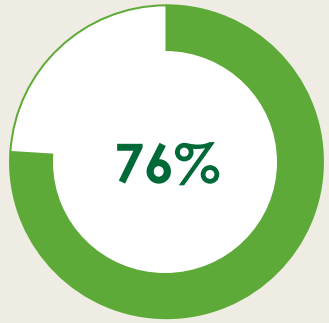
Efficient way to see patients remotely



Supports seeing patients in a timely manner



Enhances the quality of care provided



Enhances capacity to see more patients within a day

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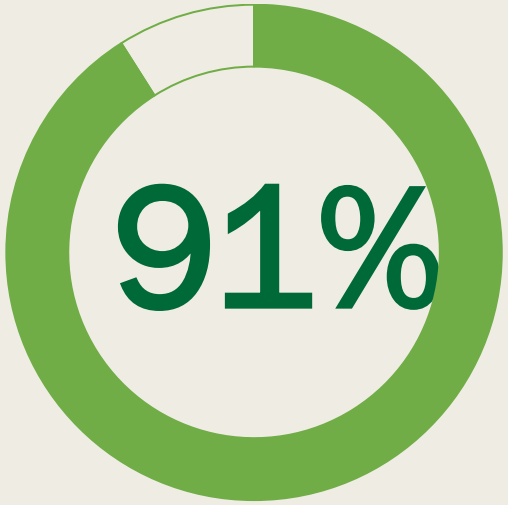
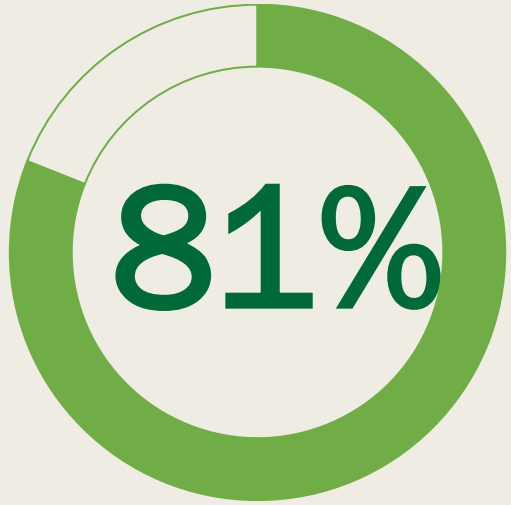
n=28

Provider Perspective



… indicated that the solution was ***easy to use***



… would ***recommend the solution*** *to their colleagues*

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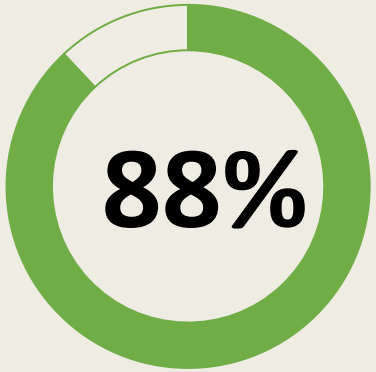
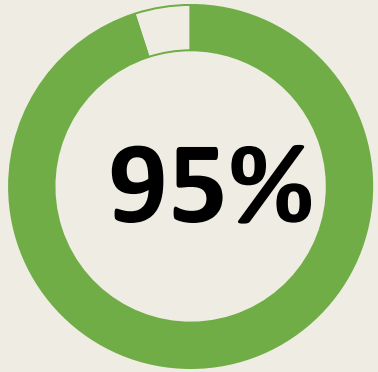
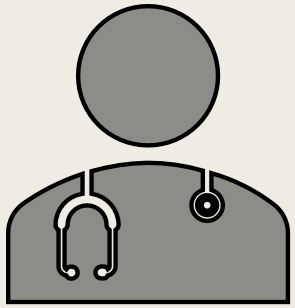
Provider Perspective



responded in 24H



responded in 48H



Increased Capacity to See More Patients

11 more visits/week (during usual working hours)

23 more visits/week

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babylon by TELUS Health

otn.

TELEMEDICINE MODALITIES

How does babylon use artificial intelligence (AI)?

babylon's AI technology can process billions of symptom combinations much faster and more accurately than the human brain. babylon's AI symptom checker has been tested against clinicians and is safe, more accurate and faster.

BE SKEPTICAL OF DISRUPTION

Grandparent cats
Skype
learning how to Skype
FunnyOnlinePictures.com

WHICH PATIENT ENCOUNTERS ARE SUITED TO TELEMEDICINE?

Types of virtual care

Synchronous Care

Evisit

Communication between clinicians- e.g. Econsult, whatsapp?

Tele-home care/Tele-LTC

Asynchronous care

Patient communication solutions- booking appointments, follow up etc.

Remember Privacy/confidentiality concerns

Visits Suited to Telemedicine in Primary Care

Medication renewals

Follow-up on lab or imaging results

Rash or skin conditions

Chronic conditions

Health education

Mental health follow up

A doctor in California appeared via video link to tell a patient he was going to die. The man's family is upset

By Dakin Andone and Artemis Moshtaghian, CNN

Updated 9:41 AM ET, Mon March 11, 2019

What Visits are Not Telemedicine Appropriate

- Goals of Care discussions?
- Palliative Care?
- Palliative Care/GOC of care discussions during a pandemic?

Specialist Visits Suited to Telemedicine

Low risk consultations

- Low acuity that does not require rapid in-person intervention
- Physical exam can be deferred to an extender or is low risk

Follow-up visits/medication renewal

Review of testing and lab results

Patients That Are Suited to Telemedicine

Have an internet connection and device with both camera and speaker to videoconference

Some degree of digital literacy

If language barrier then are at least accompanied by family member

Will they be able to follow up on your instructions

Components of an Effective Telemedicine Visit

- Consent
- Webside Manner
- Documentation
- Closing the visit-need clear instructions, more so than a physical visit

Consent

Ask if patients consent to communicate using virtual tools

Explain the risk of unauthorized disclosure or interception of personal health information

Explain that video or audio communication cannot replace the need for physical examination

Webside Manner

- Secure room
- Good lighting
- Professional background
- Good quality camera, headphones/speakers
- Professional Appearance
- Attentive body language
- Eliminate distractions- i.e. push notifications, children, pets

Avoid heavilty patterened shirts- Moiré effect on camera can distract patient

Documentation

- Gather history just like you would in-person e.g. HPI, PMHx, Meds, All, SocHx, FHx and previous investigations
- You can document while patient is giving history if you can do it in a way that maintains attentive body language
- There may be lag/buffering do not ask as many multi-part questions. Example: Any history of fevers, chills, night sweats and/or weight loss?

Documentation

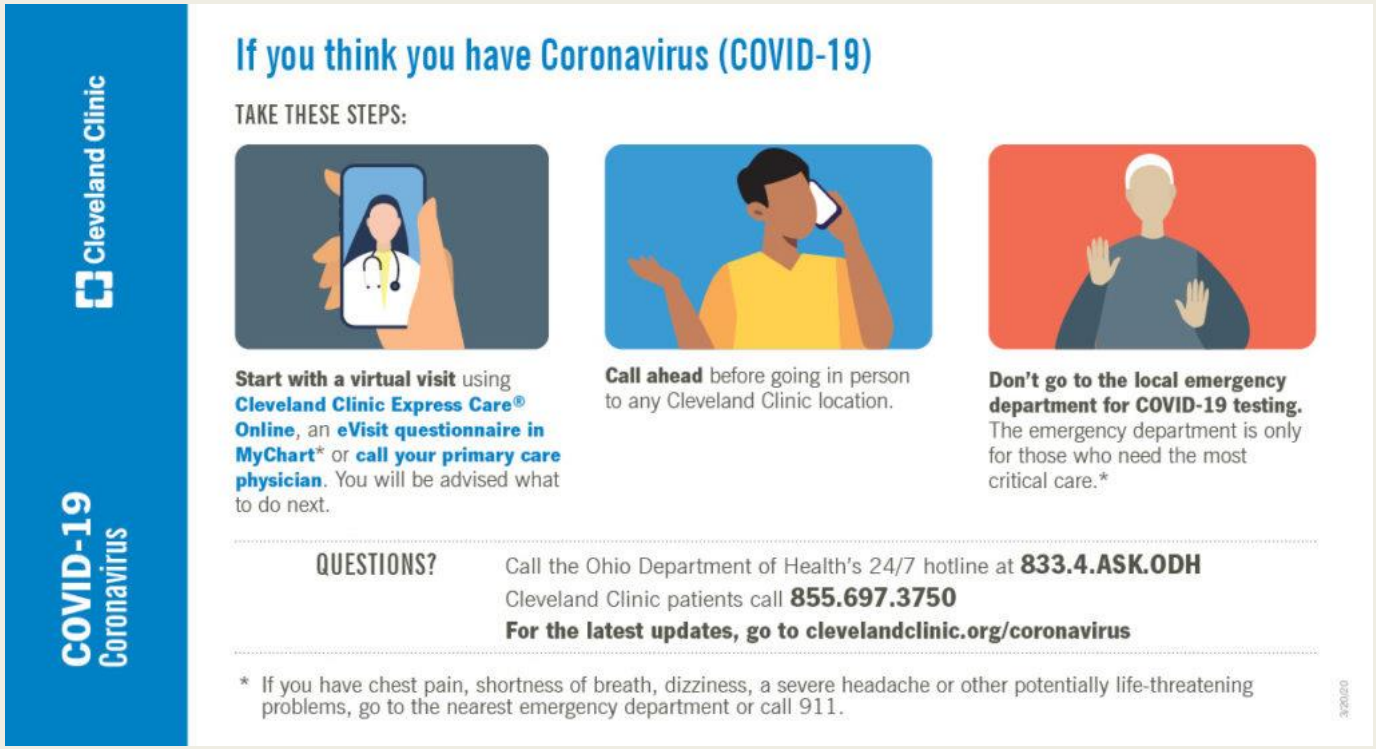
- "Please note that this is a telephone consultation visit. The patient was **informed and gave verbal consent to communicate and provide care using virtual and other telecommunication tools.** The patient was explained the **risks related to unauthorized disclosure or interception of personal health information**, and steps they can take to protect their information. We discussed that care provided through **video or audio communication cannot replace the need for physical examination** or an in-person visit for some disorders or urgent problems, and the **patient understands the need to seek urgent care in the Emergency Department as necessary."**

Physical Exam substitute

- Ideally want an extender, but in a pandemic, this is limited
- Skin rashes etc. are well-suited to telemedicine if patient facing camera is high quality
- You can still get height weight, ask for home BP measurements
- Can use telemedicine peripherals-stethoscopes, oximeters etc.
- Engage the patient in the exam using validated and non-validated techniques

Closing the visit

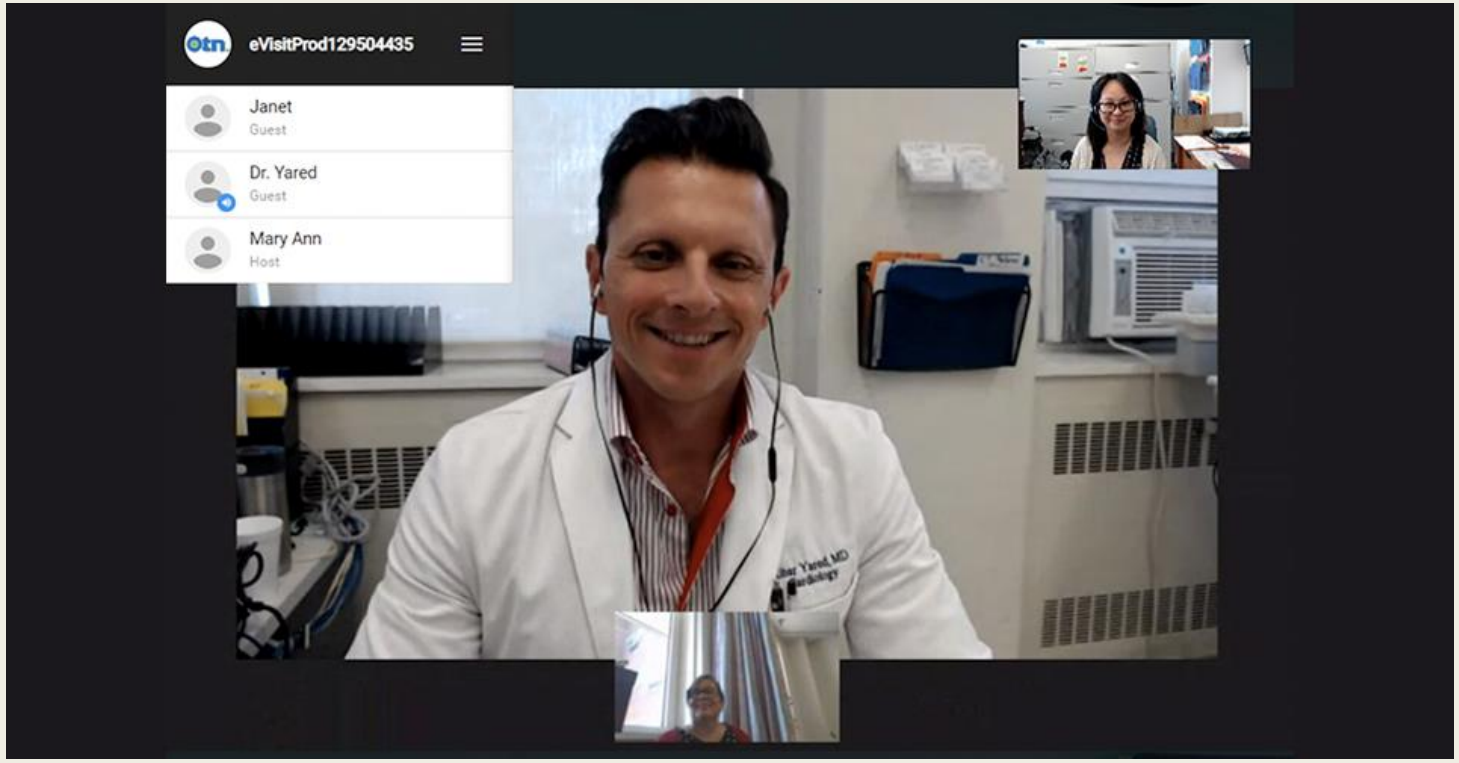
- Give space for questions
- Give clear instructions on follow-up
- Clear instructions on how to contact you/follow-up
- Inform then of when to seek emergency medical services



When to transition to an in-person encounter

- Patient appears to be acutely unwell
- The in person physical exam becomes criticallty important
- Patient is having difficulty following telemedicine visit

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE LEARNER IN TELEMEDICINE



My experiences as a virtual medicine learner

- "Physical clinic" with paper charts:
  - *1 supervisor in clinic*
  - *1 learner in clinic*
  - *1 laptop*
- No "physical clinic", remote access EMR
  - *1 supervisor at home*
  - *1 learner at home*
  - *2 laptops*

How to be an effective learner

- Discuss work-flow expectations **early**
  - Ensure time allotted to receive feedback and discuss around cases
  - You may see less patients to ensure high fidelity consults
- Be flexible, this is a new consultation modality and there will be some hiccups along the way
- Work with your staff to trouble shoot issues
- There will be unique patient advocacy scenarios

How to impress your preceptor

- Prepare for consultations before the day starts instead of before each case
- Be flexible in the way your review cases
  - Preceptor may review the case with you in length beforehand, and then again briefly at the end of the consult with the patient present
  - May be asked to review case in private or with patient present

How to impress your preceptor

- "Webside" manner is just as important as bedside manner
  - If you are not keeping direct eye contact with patient explain why (ie. Documenting)
- Documentation
  - Check in with your preceptor- what are their preferences?
  - Document consent
  - Always give the patient a "worst case scenario" action plan--> and document this!

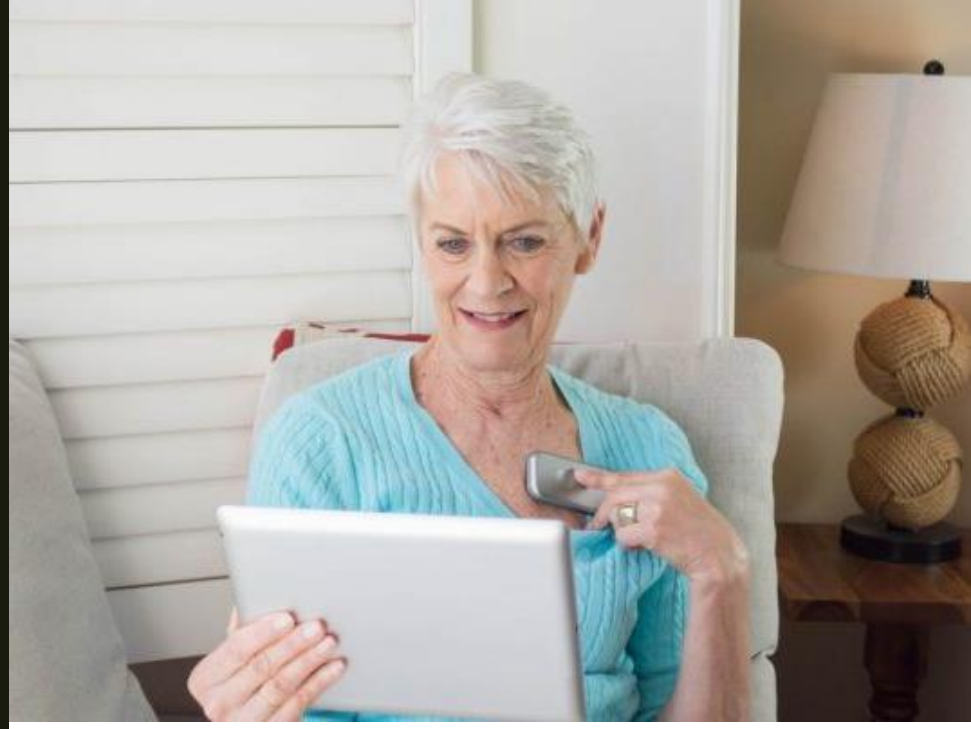
Documenting learner participation

This patient was seen as a telemedicine appointment using a virtual video platform. I concurrently monitored the medical student while they conducted the visit, and I personally reviewed and evaluated the patient as well. I agree with the medical student's note.

This patient was seen as a telemedicine appointment using a virtual video platform by the medical student while under my supervision. I reviewed the pertinent/available medical records, and I reviewed the medical student's evaluation, assessment and plan.

Emerging technologies

- Virtual walk-in clinics
- AI based triage
- Virtual waiting room
- Remote monitoring with telemedicine peripherals



QUESTIONS?