



CredeMtia Newsletter

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THE FUTURE OF TELEMEDICINE

Telemedicine can be defined as the use of electronic technology to provide medical care when distance separates patient and provider. Telehealth can be defined as remote medical care that does not always involve clinical services. It allows providers to expand their reach and improve their efficiency. While maintaining high-quality medical care while providing patient safety."

Medicare began reimbursement for telemedicine services after the passage of the Balance Budget Act. This, in the hope that patients in rural communities and those without reasonable access to medical specialists could receive adequate medical evaluations, and thus improve medical care, at a reasonable cost. The services were to a limited set of circumstances, which typically required the patient to leave their home to receive services. For example, patients who lived in a rural area with limited access to providers could use telemedicine but had to travel to a local center for the virtual appointment.

Today, a variety of acute and chronic conditions have been identified that may be appropriate for telemedicine or telehealth, for example, diabetes, asthma and hypertension, among others. In each, there is a reasonable level of certainty in diagnosing and designing a treatment plan, especially when visual information is combined with access to a medical record. On the other hand, there are some conditions that are not suitable for telemedicine, among them, an in-person visit to the doctor, so that he evaluates the patient due to the severity of the symptoms or the need for information that requires a contact test.

Before COVID-19, telemedicine had not achieved the widespread use and popularity that was expected. Today, it is presented as the ideal solution to the problem of patient travel to hospitals, allocating hospital capacity to important cases, all while slowing the spread of the disease.