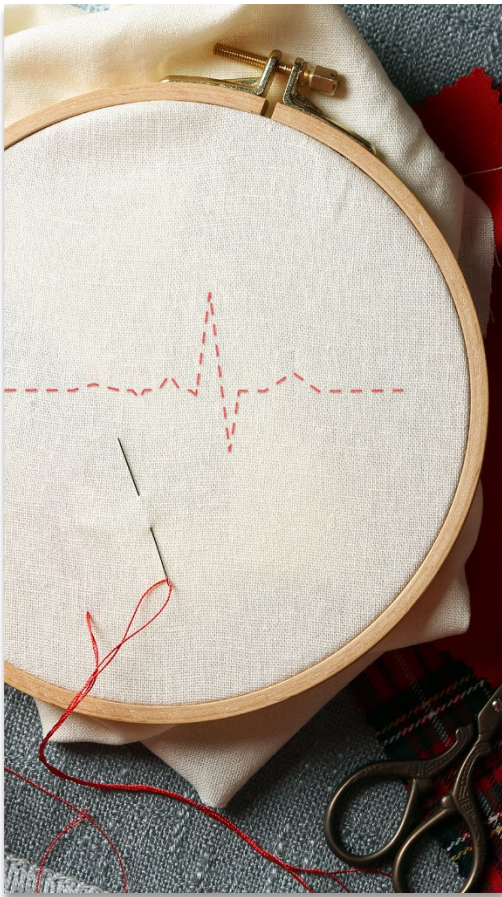


# Telehealth & Virtual Care

## Technology is Woven Into the Fabric of Healthcare



Telehealth is not new to healthcare, but its journey to being widely adopted has been a slow one. One of the earliest and most famous uses of hospital-based telemedicine was in the late 1950s and early 1960s when a closed-circuit television link was established between the Nebraska Psychiatric Institute and Norfolk State Hospital for psychiatric consultations. Since then, the technology has advanced exponentially, but adoption has been slow. According to a study completed in 2018 by the American College of Physicians, the biggest barriers to expansion included state and privileging licensure, reimbursement models, integration into practice workflows, patient access to technology, security and patient privacy.

That all changed in early 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic escalated the need for healthcare systems to quickly pivot from in-person, onsite interactions with patients to remote care management. The search for surge capacity, sudden shutdowns of traditional care sites, and unprecedented infection risks have made the value of robust virtual health capabilities undeniable for many organizations originally slow to embrace it.

At Nectar, we recognize to maintain long term adoption and saturation of Telehealth into clinical workflows well beyond the impetus of a pandemic, it will require an integrated approach for evaluating and organizing the considerations specific to the people, process's, information and technology critical to the technology's success.

## The Need Continues



### Consumer

While the surge in telehealth has been driven by the immediate goal to avoid exposure to COVID-19, with more than **70%** of in-person visits cancelled<sup>1</sup>, **76%** of survey respondents indicated they were highly or moderately likely to use telehealth going forward<sup>2</sup>, and **74%** of telehealth users reported high satisfaction<sup>3</sup>.

### Provider

Health systems, independent practices, behavioral health providers, and others rapidly scaled telehealth offerings to fill the gap between need and cancelled in-person care and are reporting 50-175Xs the number of telehealth visits pre-COVID.<sup>4</sup> In addition, **57%** of providers view telehealth more favorably than they did before COVID-19 and 64% are more comfortable using it.<sup>5</sup>

## The Stakeholders

Virtual Care impacts patients, physicians, and administrators alike.

For the **patient**, it's about online scheduling and on-demand service, access to preferred providers, ease of use (clear video, audio, and communications), and electronic consent and intake.

For the **physician**, priorities are ease of use - embedded into existing schedules and workflows/EMR, quality of care, inclusion of peripherals and data, and extended support for inpatient needs, remote monitoring, and CME.

For the **administrator**, needs are for a standard technology platform that is easy to support and maintain, secure and compliant, provides a clear path to coding and reimbursement, robust reporting, ease of adoption, and electronic consent for insurance, privacy policy, forms, and intake procedures.

## The Virtual Care Experience

Nectar Strategic Consulting works collaboratively with its clients to assure design and implementation of a virtual care experience for organizations at all stages of development and at every stage of the journey.



## An Integrated Approach for Organizing People, Process, Information and Technology

As members of the Pixel Health ecosystem, Nectar and VertitechIT have partnered to develop an integrated and symbiotic approach for organizing a strategic roadmap to the development, deployment and adoption of Virtual Care within a healthcare system.

While VertitechIT focuses on IT infrastructure, architecture, and system-wide interoperability required for the integration of the technology, Nectar works in parallel to evaluate, engage and collaborate with the people, workflows and user requirements necessary to make the technology successful.

Within healthcare, we must recognize that no matter how amazing the technology, if the care teams perceive the technology as a "tripping hazard" within their workflows, they will create work-arounds, impeding full adoption. Those detours are costly and render the perception that the technology is obtrusive or broken. With one integrated approach from Nectar and VertitechIT, we improve efficiency, creativity, productivity, outcomes, and job satisfaction, with the goal of optimizing the technology within workflows.



1. McKinsey COVID-19 Consumer Survey, April 27, 2020.
2. McKinsey COVID-19 Consumer Survey, May 20, 2020.
3. McKinsey COVID-19 Consumer Survey, April 13, 2020.
4. Ibid
5. McKinsey COVID-19 Physician Survey, May, 2020.