

## What is Telehealth/Telemedicine?

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Telehealth, also referred to as Telemedicine, is the use of technology from a distance to provide health care services. Telehealth is used to deliver a wide range of medical services including diagnosis and management, education, and other health care needs. These include, but are not at all limited to:

- Dentistry
- Counseling
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Home health
- Chronic disease monitoring and management
- Disaster management
- Consumer and professional education

Telehealth technology can be used to support health care in multiple ways. Some examples of the types of telehealth include:

- **Live video:** live, two-way interaction between a person (patient, caregiver, or provider) and a provider using audio-visual technology. This type of service is also referred to as “real-time” and may serve as a substitute for an in-person encounter when it is not available. For example, a patient’s psychiatrist could contact a patient through a secure app on a smartphone to have a conversation about the need to modify medications.
- **Store-and-forward:** transmission of recorded health history (including pre-recorded videos and digital images such as x-rays and photos) through a secure electronic communications system to a practitioner, usually a specialist, who uses the information to evaluate the case or render a service outside of a real-time or live interaction. For example, a primary care physician who sees an abnormal-looking mole on a patient can take a picture of the mole and securely sends the information to a Dermatologist for diagnosis.
- **Remote monitoring:** Personal health and medical data collection from an individual in one location via electronic communication technologies, which is transmitted to a provider in a different location for use in care and related support. This type of service allows a provider to continue to track healthcare data for a patient once released to home or a care facility. For example, when released from a hospital stay due to a heart attack, a patient can wear a heart monitor for a set period after discharge so that the hospital can evaluate ongoing recovery.
- **Mobile health:** Health care and public health activities supported by mobile communication devices such as cell phones and tablets. Mobile health technology can be used for targeted text messages that promote healthy behavior, statewide alerts about disease outbreaks, or for patient-specific health care support. For example, a patient who has been diagnosed with Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) can use a device attached to their smartphone when they feel symptoms, to determine if they are having an AFib episode.