
Common Terms Associated with Telehealth and Telemedicine

Telehealth is the delivery and facilitation of health and health-related services including medical care, provider and patient education, health information services, and self-care via telecommunications and digital communication technologies. Telemedicine is a subset of telehealth that refers solely to the provision of health care services and education over a distance, through the use of telecommunications technology. Telemedicine involves the use of electronic communications and software to provide clinical services to patients without an in-person visit. Telemedicine technology is frequently used for follow-up visits, management of chronic conditions, medication management, specialist consultation and a host of other clinical services that can be provided remotely via secure video and audio connections.

Below are terms associated with Telehealth and Telemedicine:

■ **App** – An abbreviation for “application.” It is a piece of software which comes pre-installed on your device or it is software that you install yourself. Apps typically run locally on your device, but can also run through a web browser. <insert link to what is an app video https://youtu.be/21mpGLef_jY>

■ **Audio-teleconferencing** – Audio-teleconferencing is simply a voice conversation between two or more people at separate locations.

■ **Encryption** – Encryption is a system of encoding data on a web page or email where the information can only be retrieved and decoded by the person or computer system authorized to access it. The most secure telemedicine platforms use encryption to prevent unauthorized access to video transmissions and other data.

■ **Store-and-Forward** – This is the type of telemedicine where a patient does not meet with a doctor in person. Instead, data such as medical images or bio-signals can be sent to the specialist as needed when it has been

acquired from the patient. This practice is common in the medical fields of dermatology, radiology and pathology.

■ **Telemonitoring** – The use of audio, video, and other telecommunications and electronic information sharing technologies to monitor the health status of a patient from a distance. Telemonitoring can be used to track a patient’s heart rate or blood sugar levels, for example.

■ **Virtual visit** – Doctor consultation that takes place between patients and clinicians via communications technology — the video and audio connectivity that allows “virtual” meetings to occur in real time, from virtually any location.

■ **Mobile Health (mHealth)** – This is the use of smart devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.), and the health-based software apps developed for these devices, that supports continued healthcare. Many health-based apps exist now and can monitor everything from a diabetic patient’s blood sugar level to one’s daily water intake. These apps help to encourage healthier lifestyle behaviors and also (if designed to) can integrate with a patient’s personal health records.