



YOUR TELEHEALTH PROGRAM IS NOW A SERVICE LINE:

7 BEST PRACTICES

FOR LONG-TERM MARKETING SUCCESS

You set it up fast, now make it last!

Ramp up your marketing efforts as virtual visits become a mainstay.

In our not-out-of-the-woods-yet COVID-19 reality, virtual visits will likely continue to be a mainstay of care. And that's good news — because your organization has probably invested heavily in technology, staff training and technical support to meet the sudden spike in virtual visit demand.

But simply offering virtual visits is not enough to help your organization stand out.

The field is becoming saturated with providers that include:

- Local competitors who are also trying to build up their brand in the virtual marketplace
- Established telehealth platforms that have the expertise and resources to quickly gain a foothold in a new service area

Now's the time to start marketing telemedicine as a discrete service line. We offer 7 tips.



#1:

CREATE A TELEHEALTH DIGITAL FRONT DOOR

Your telehealth web content should be as warm and welcoming as your content for in-person services.

Digital marketing for in-person care builds relationships with patients before they make their first appointment. Successful content answers their questions and explains what to expect. Create a telehealth digital front door to give your virtual users the same experience, even if they're established patients.

A simple login screen with service descriptions can feel transactional. A dedicated landing page that welcomes users sets the stage for a positive care experience.

Your digital front door should include:

- Explanation of telehealth and assurance of quality
- Links to physician bios
- Descriptions of services available
- Pictures or a video explaining the telehealth process step-by-step, including how to make an appointment for follow-up care.



Example: University of Utah Health



#2:

PROVIDE MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS

Telemedicine may be a hot topic among health providers and marketers. But many patients don't understand the value it provides, much less how to access it.

Patients who have been delaying care might start their search based on the service they need — not the format in which they receive it. They're more likely to search "knee problem" than "virtual visit with orthopedist."

Including telemedicine calls to action throughout your site helps meet them where they are and, hopefully, piques their interest in a virtual visit.

Put telemedicine calls to action on your:

- Landing page sliders
- Location pages
- Physician bios (for providers who are available via virtual visit)
- Program pages
- COVID-19 content
- Contact us pages



#3:

FAQ CONTENT IS THE ANSWER

One of the key tenets of building trust online is anticipating and answering users' questions. And with telemedicine, users are likely to have lots of questions. How does it work? Will my insurance cover it? Is it secure?

The answers to these questions may make the difference in whether people choose to schedule a virtual visit with your organization. So make this information easy to read and easy to find.

FAQ topics you may wish to cover:

Appointments:

- Do I need an appointment?
- How do I make an appointment?
- How long are the appointments?

Technology requirements:

- What device can I use?
- Can I do this on my phone?
- Do I need to download an app?

Eligibility requirements:

- Do I need to be an established patient?
- Do I have to live in the same state the doctors are licensed in?
- Are services available for patients of all ages?

Logistics:

- How do I log in to the virtual visit platform?
- Can I log in early?
- Who can I contact if I need help?

 #4:

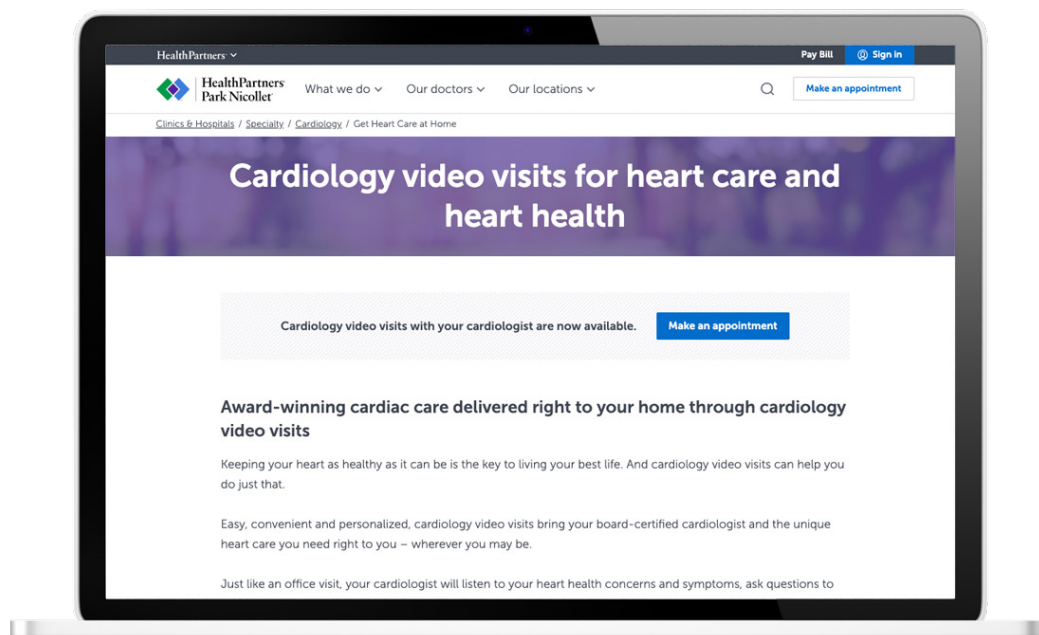
LET USERS KNOW YOUR SPECIALISTS ARE AVAILABLE

The pandemic is creating unanticipated medical needs. Many people are experiencing hardships affecting their physical and mental well-being. Changes in daily activities can lead to injuries. And stress eating may be exacerbating existing medical problems or creating new ones.

Providing virtual visits for specialists helps people access much-needed care. Market these services so people can easily access the care they need.

Tips for doing this:

- Create content that meets the specific needs of patients seeking specialty care, like this virtual clinic for people in [psychiatric crisis](#).
- List the [medical specialties](#) available for virtual visits.
- Make it easy for patients to see specialists with whom they already have an [established relationship](#).



Example: Health Partners Park Nicollet



#5:

USE ONLINE SURVEYS TO GROW YOUR VIRTUAL SERVICES

Patient ratings carry serious sway in provider selection: 8 out of 10 patients use online provider reviews to decide about their care¹.

People are looking for providers with a high volume of positive patient reviews. So start collecting and sharing this data about your telemedicine providers.

Ask patients to participate in an online survey after a virtual visit. These surveys can grow your service line through:

1. **Positive patient ratings** that give your providers instant credibility with potential patients
2. **Feedback about the encounter**, providing your team with insights on how to improve future virtual care experiences
3. **Testimonials** to add trust to your pages

Virtual visit online survey topics may include:

- **Technical aspects:** How easy was it to log in? See and hear the doctor?
- **Interpersonal communication:** Did you feel comfortable discussing your concern with the doctor?
- **Quality:** Did the encounter meet your needs? Did the doctor clearly articulate next steps (if applicable)?
- **Satisfaction:** On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (good), how would you rate your experience?



#6:

LEVERAGE VIRTUAL VISIT REMINDERS

Are you sending an email reminder to all patients who sign up for virtual visits? You should be. It's a courtesy and an opportunity to promote related services.

Sure, all the information they need may be in your patient portal. But patients who are new to virtual visits are likely new to your patient portal as well. There's nothing more discouraging than technical challenges when you're already feeling sick enough to need a doctor. An email reminder puts helpful information in reach ahead of time.

In addition to the obvious (date, time, name of provider), keep your brand top of mind by including:

- Links to your virtual visit platform and how to access support
- List of other specialties offering virtual visits
- Ways to stay in touch after the virtual visit (read: plug your patient portal here)
- Reminder about the virtual visit survey

¹<https://patientengagementhit.com/news/how-do-patients-use-online-provider-reviews-for-care-decisions>



#7:

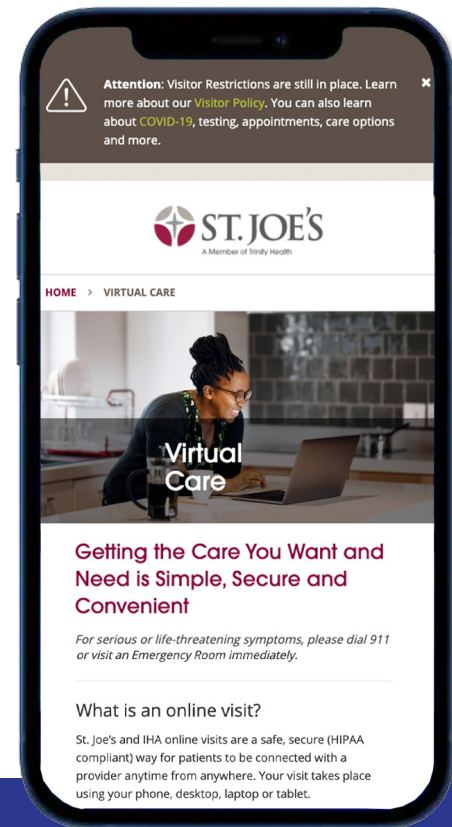
DON'T FORGET ABOUT VIRTUAL VISITS FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

People are still grappling with when and how to seek evaluations for COVID-19-like symptoms and exposure. Should anyone with a recent COVID-19 exposure get tested? If they have symptoms, can a virtual visit help them know whether they should get tested? What circumstances warrant a trip to the ER?

Organizing your content to make COVID-19 telehealth information easily accessible can help your program stand out. If you offer immediate provider access — either on-demand or within an hour — make sure users know it's an option.

And if you offer multiple virtual visit options, briefly explain how each one works — ideally in a way that doesn't require clicking through multiple pages.

Example: St. Joe's*



TO CYBERSPACE AND BEYOND

Successfully market your telemedicine services by considering your patients' needs, search habits and feedback. Now that you know the basics, you're ready to stand out in this emerging field.

CAN WE HELP?

Aha Media Group specializes in healthcare copywriting, content marketing and content strategy. We've been at the forefront of creating content that helps hospitals communicate about COVID-19 and other difficult health topics. *Let's talk.*

* signifies an Aha Media client.

