

# Welcome



Practice and Policy to Advance Health Literacy  
and Health Equity

October 14-15, 2021

**Telehealth: Friend or Foe to Health Access?**



Practice and Policy to Advance Health Literacy and Health Equity

**Arjoon – Patient Advocate**

**Telehealth**

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**In Mental Health**

# Challenges and Barriers

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- Communication
- Technology
- Lack of knowledge of programs and terms



# Success in Telehealth

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- Practice what was done in person
- Accessibility of resources and programs
- Consumer benefits



# Suggestions to make telehealth accessible and usable

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- What tech needs do consumers have?
- Invest on professionals' and consumers' development
- Provide easier access to services online



# Contact Information

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# Can telehealth improve access?

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Health Literacy in Action Conference  
October 14 2021

# Disclosures

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- None

## Real-time "Synchronous"

## Store and Forward "Asynchronous"

Visits

(Provider to Patient)

### Virtual Visits



*Real-time video interaction  
between MD and patient*

Follow up visits to patient in a home or  
outpatient office

### eVisits



*Online exchange of medical information  
between MD & patient*

A tool generally used for chronic care  
management and medication adjustments

Consults

(Provider to Provider)

### Virtual Consults



*Real-time interaction between  
MD to patient's MD*

New or follow up consult for a patient located in a  
facility (ED, ICU, post-acute care)

### eConsults & Second Opinions



*eConsults: Online  
exchange of medical  
information  
between MDs*

Lower complexity  
medical opinion

*Second Opinions: Online  
exchange of medical  
information between  
MDs*

High complexity medical  
opinion with extensive  
record review



Growing patient preference ensures ...  
healio.com



Patient experience is evolving as ...  
healthcareitnews.com



Patient Ed and Telehealth Opportunities ...  
healthwise.org



Delivering more care remotely will be ...  
aamc.org



A Patient's Guide to Telemedicine: What ...  
himss.org



20 takeaways from Health Affairs ...  
mobihealthnews.com



How Telehealth Impacts Patient Care  
arcare.net



Telehealth as home healthcare ...  
athenahealth.com



82% of consumers do not use telehealth ...  
medcitynews.com



Coronavirus fuels explosive growth in ...  
gcn.com



Industry Voices—When the COVID-...  
fiercehealthcare.com



Telemedicine and Telehealth in 2019 ...  
solvhealth.com



Patients overwhelm telehealth services ...  
statnews.com



From telehealth visits to digital ...  
fiercehealthcare.com



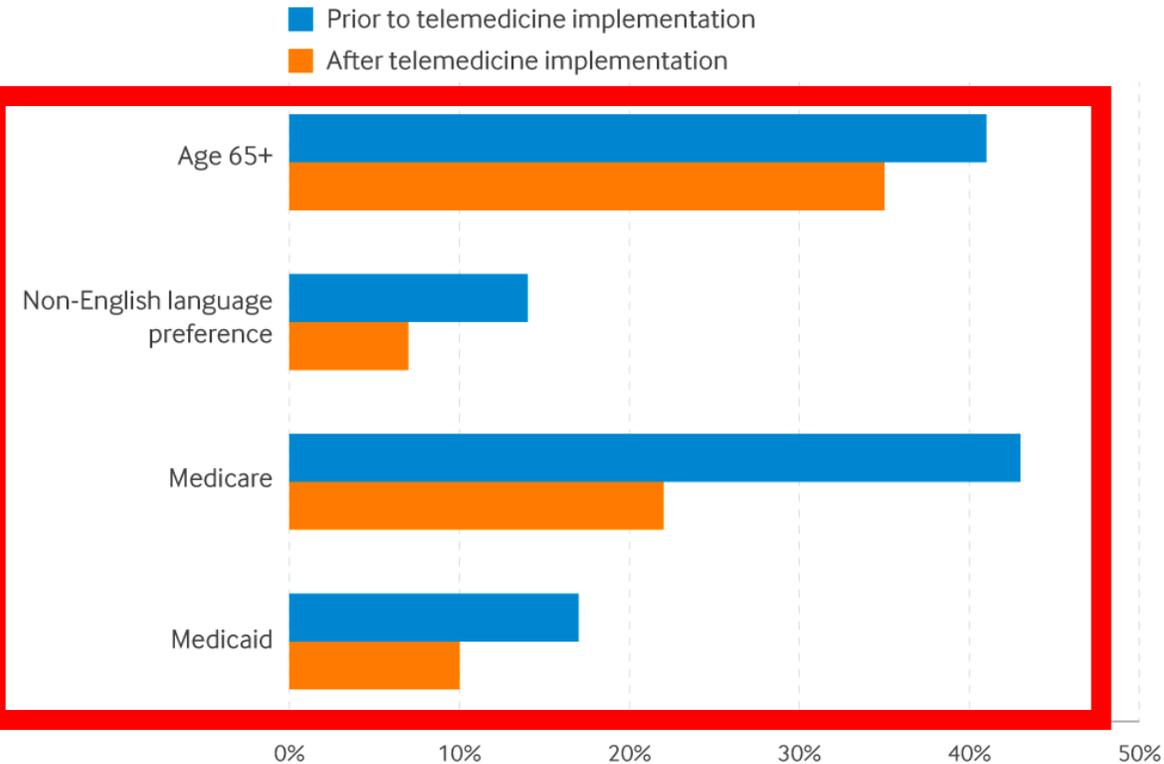
Telemedicine benefits, disadvantages ...  
medicalnewstoday.com



What Is Telehealth? | Telehealth VA  
telehealth.va.gov

## Patient Visits by Age, Language, and Insurance Before and After Telemedicine Scale-Up

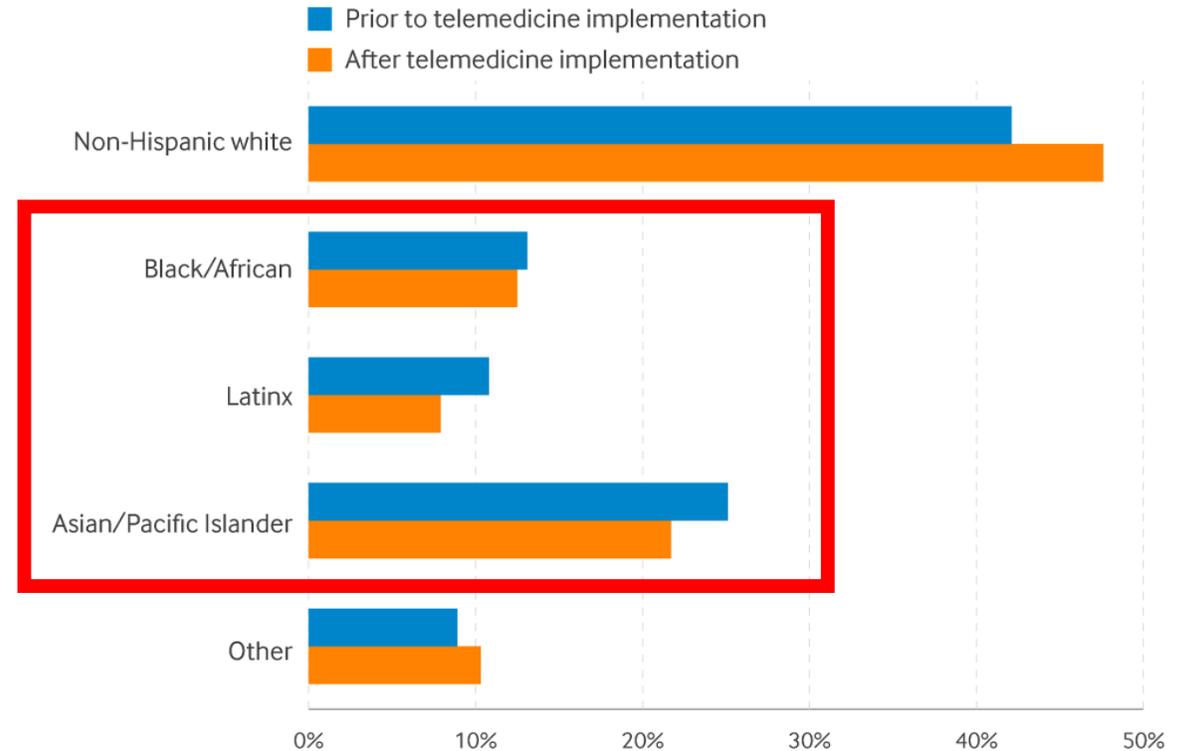
This chart shows the proportion of patient visits seen by age, language preference, and insurance type prior to (2/17–2/28/2020) and after (3/23–4/3/2020) scaled-up telemedicine implementation to address the Covid-19 pandemic at the UCSF General Internal Medicine Primary Care Practice (P=0.002 for age ≥65 and P<0.001 for other comparisons). A significantly smaller proportion of visits after scaled-up telemedicine implementation were with vulnerable patients.



Source: The authors  
 NEJM Catalyst (catalyst.nejm.org) © Massachusetts Medical Society

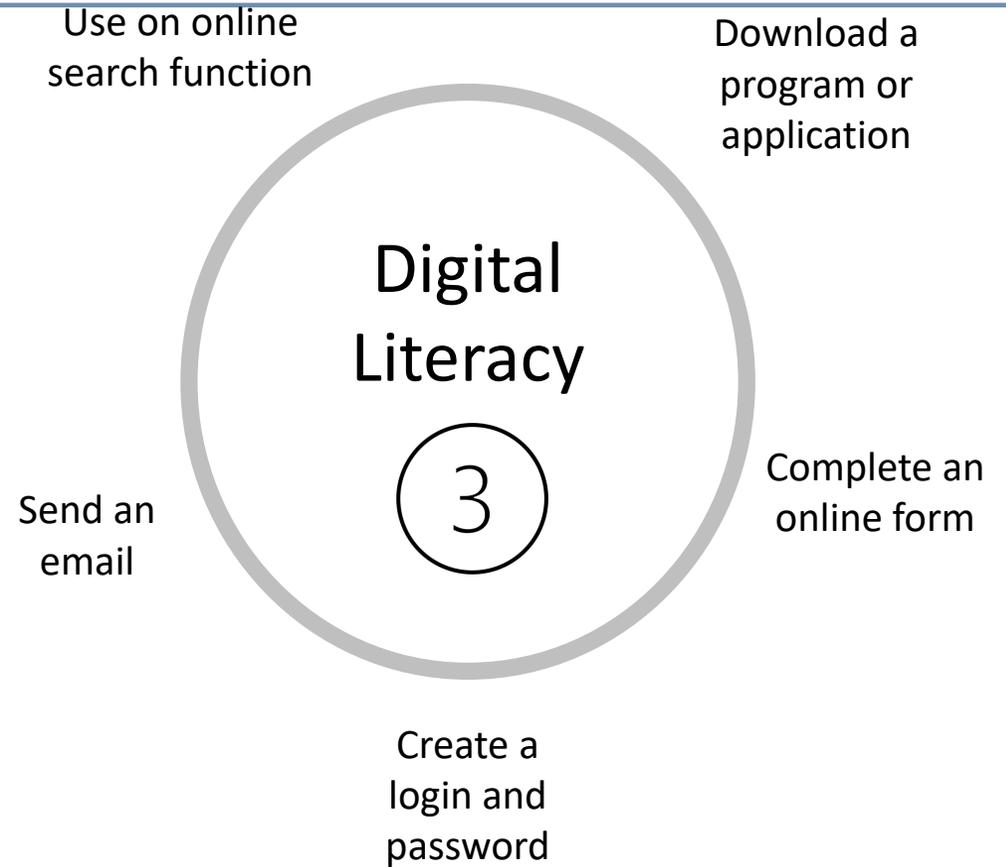
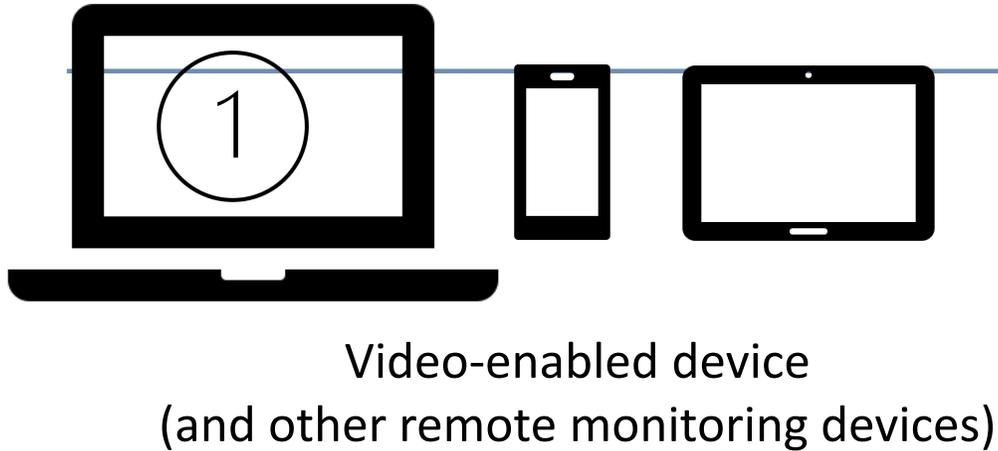
## Patient Visits by Race/Ethnicity Before and After Telemedicine Scale-Up

This chart shows the proportion of patient visits seen by patient race/ethnicity prior to (2/17–2/28/2020) and after (3/23–4/3/2020) scaled-up telemedicine implementation to address the Covid-19 pandemic at the UCSF General Internal Medicine Primary Care Practice (P=0.006 using chi-squared test). A smaller proportion of visits with vulnerable populations occurred after implementation.



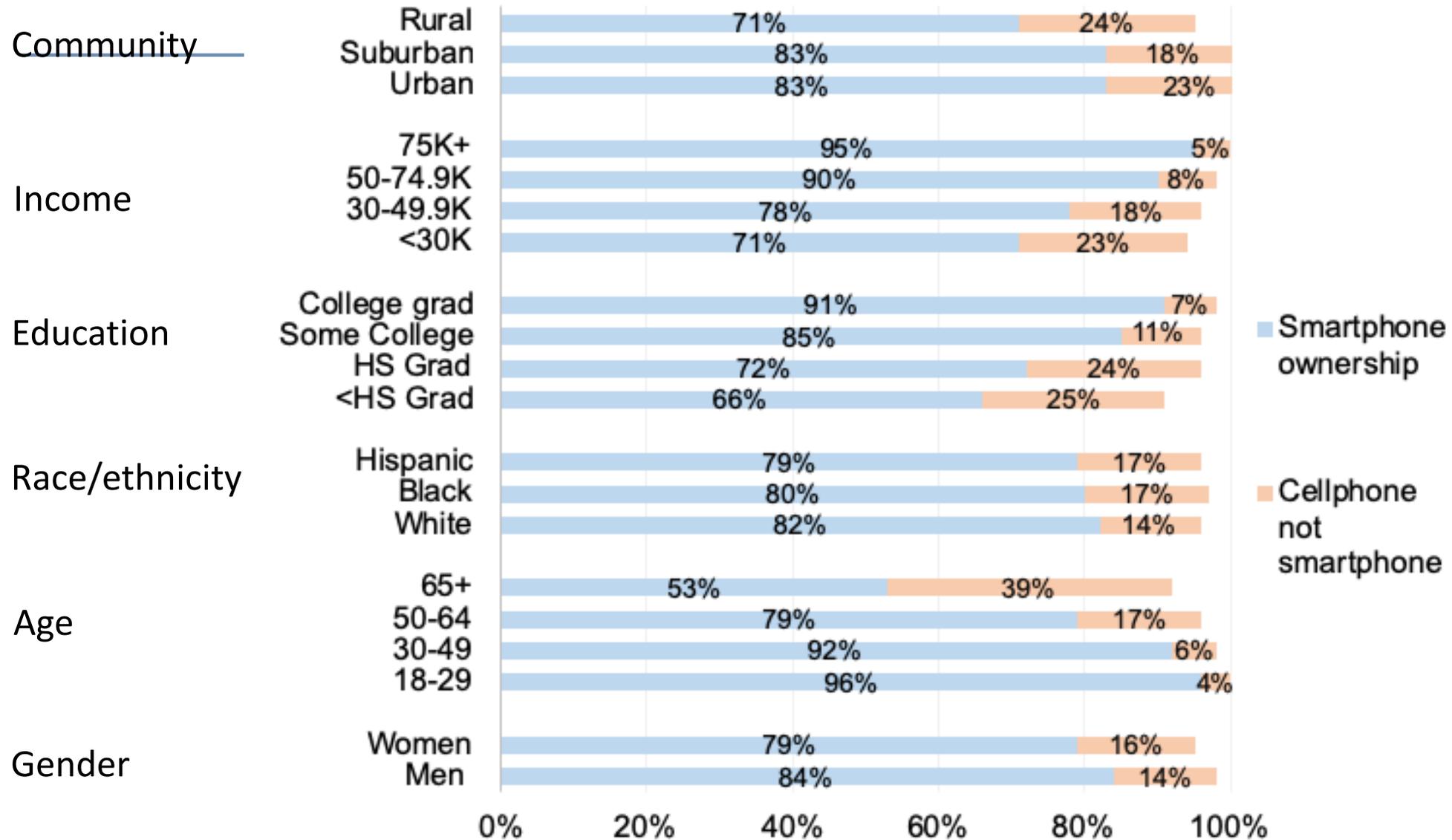
Source: The authors  
 NEJM Catalyst (catalyst.nejm.org) © Massachusetts Medical Society

# Patient-facing barriers to telehealth



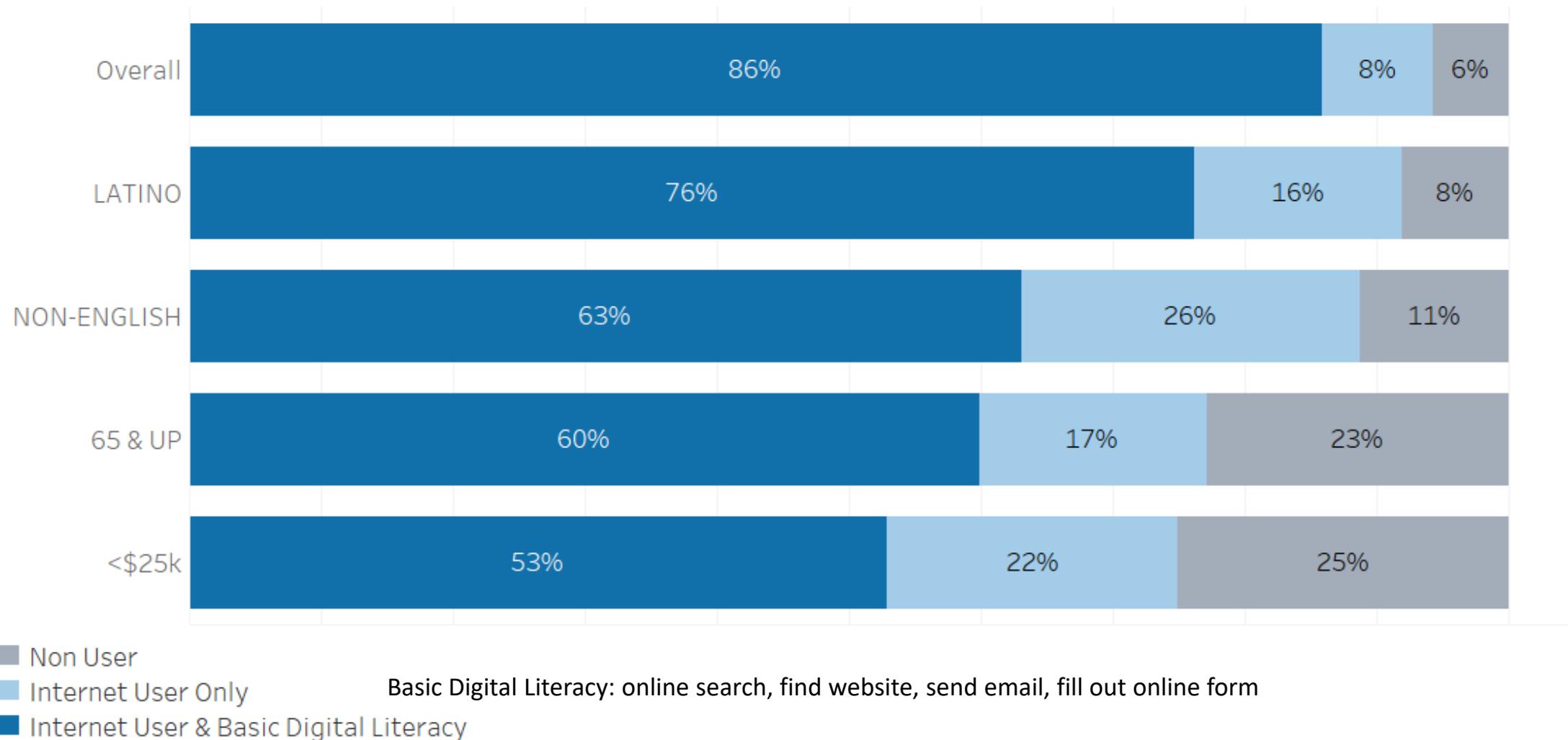
# Mobile device disparities exist by age, income, education, community

% of US adults who own cell phones



# Digital Divide in San Francisco

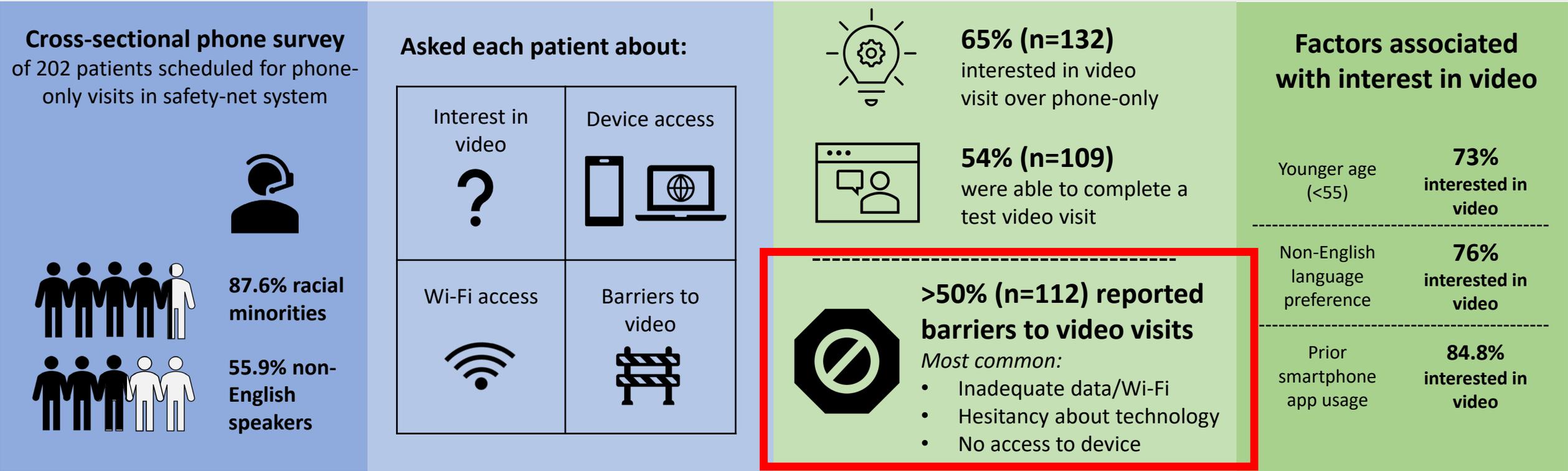
## Internet Usage & Basic Digital Literacy in San Francisco



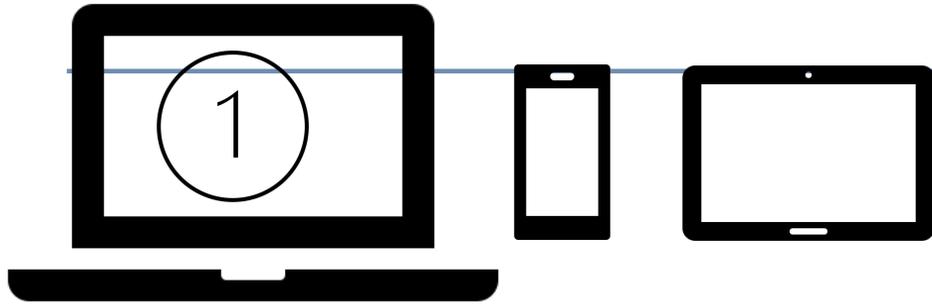
# Patient Interest in and Barriers to Telemedicine Video Visits in a Multi-lingual Urban Safety-Net System

Khoong, Butler, Mesina, Su, DeFries, Nijagal, Lyles; JAMIA 2020

**Conclusions:** Safety-net patients are interested in video visits and able to successfully complete test visits. Internet/data access is a common barrier and may impact equitable telemedicine access



# Clinician/System-facing barriers to telehealth



Video-enabled devices

2

HIPAA secure video platform



3



New technology-focused roles and skills for healthcare team

Telehealth physical exam

Pre-appointment tech support

Appropriateness for telehealth

Connection to digital resources

# Clinician concerns

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## Patient barriers

*“...cannot reach... patients that don’t have phones...”*

*“...phone plans add cost when phone visits are used... costs not covered in billing”*

## Logistic challenges

- *“...family being distracted”*
- *“...difficulty with interpreter logistics ESPECIALLY when working remotely”*

## Safety concerns

- *“...explaining changes in medication doses without showing... Can be tricky/feel a little unsafe”*
- *“...couldn’t do... neuro exam on a patient in whom it would have been helpful...”*

## Satisfaction

- *“... significantly takes away from my satisfaction... I dread phone clinic days, sadly.”*

# Clinicians' perceived benefits

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## Convenience / efficiency

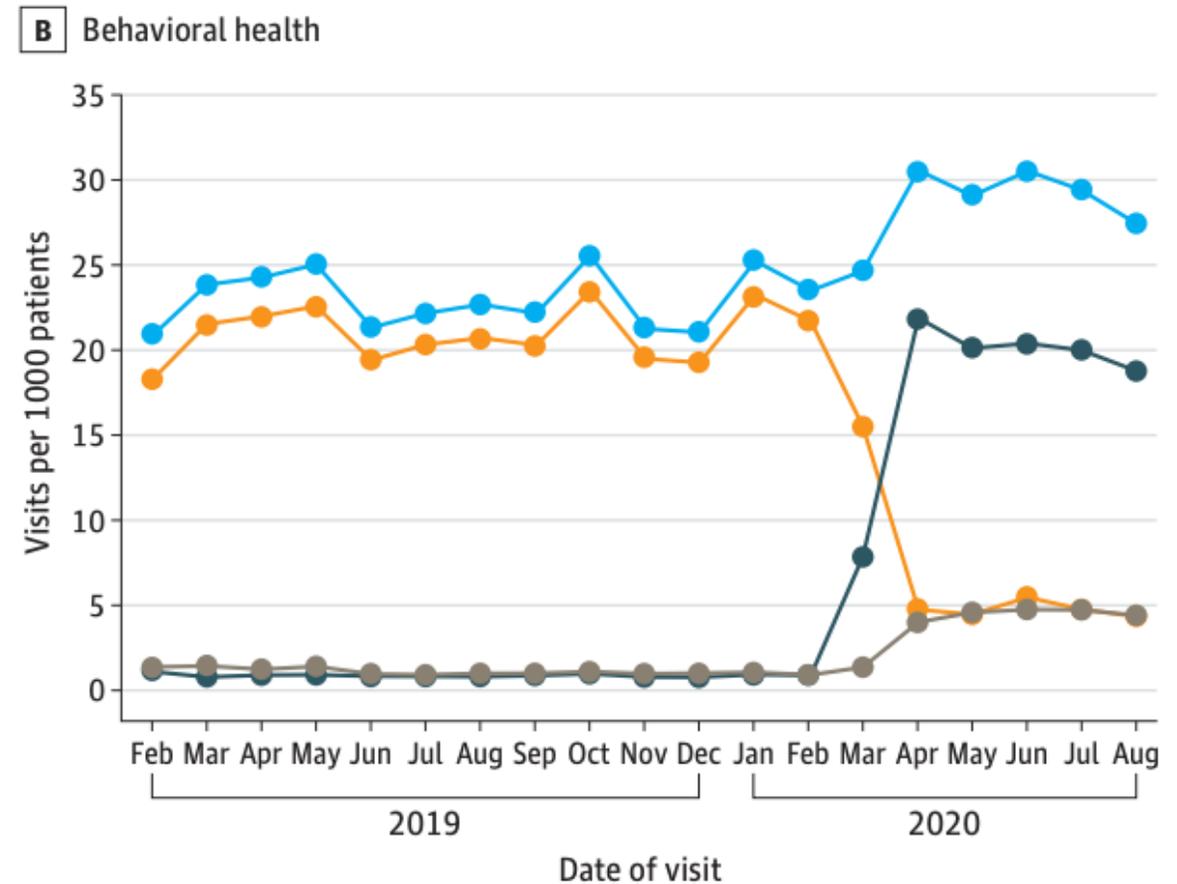
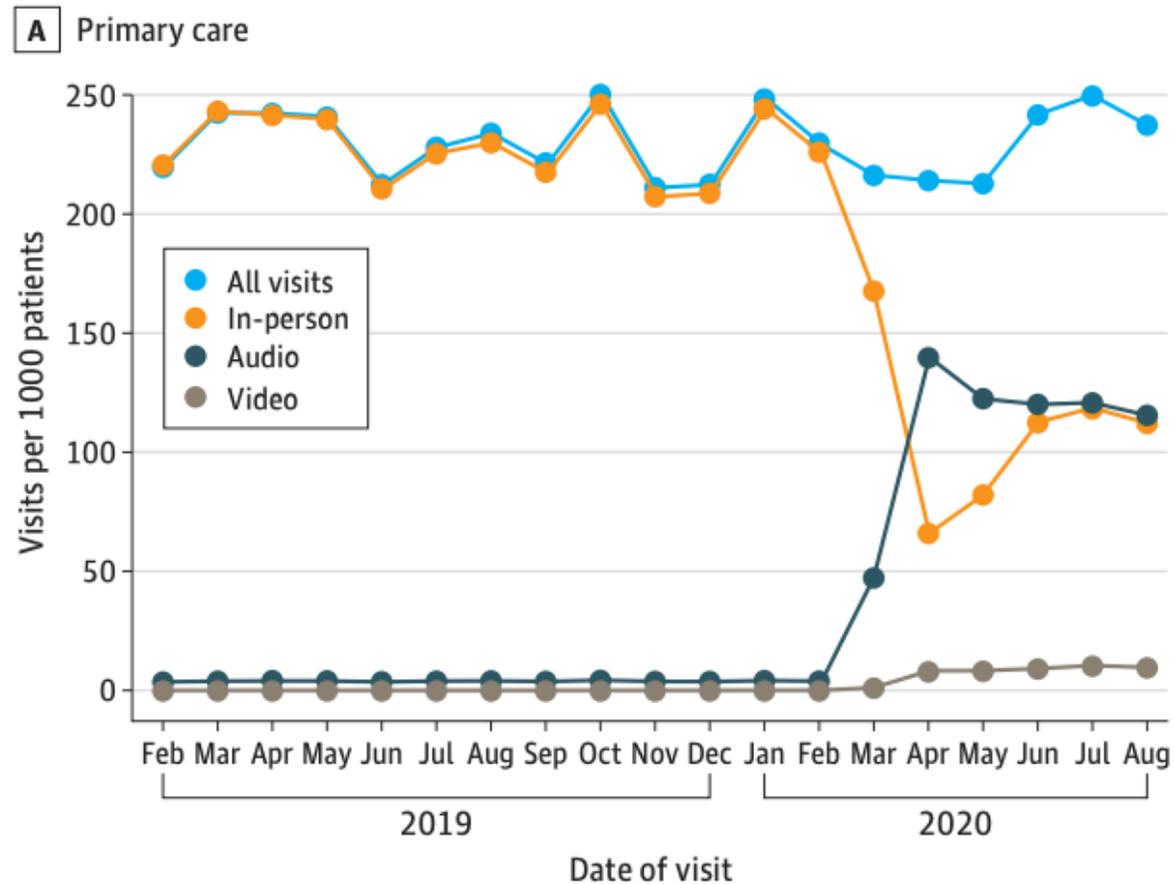
- *"...valuable for patients who have limited transportation or ability to take time off work"*
- *"...linking in interested family members is easy"*
- *".. For managing some chronic conditions or doing social needs screening... very useful and more convenient for families..."*

## Patient comfort

- *"... patients asked more questions and were in some ways more engaged..."*

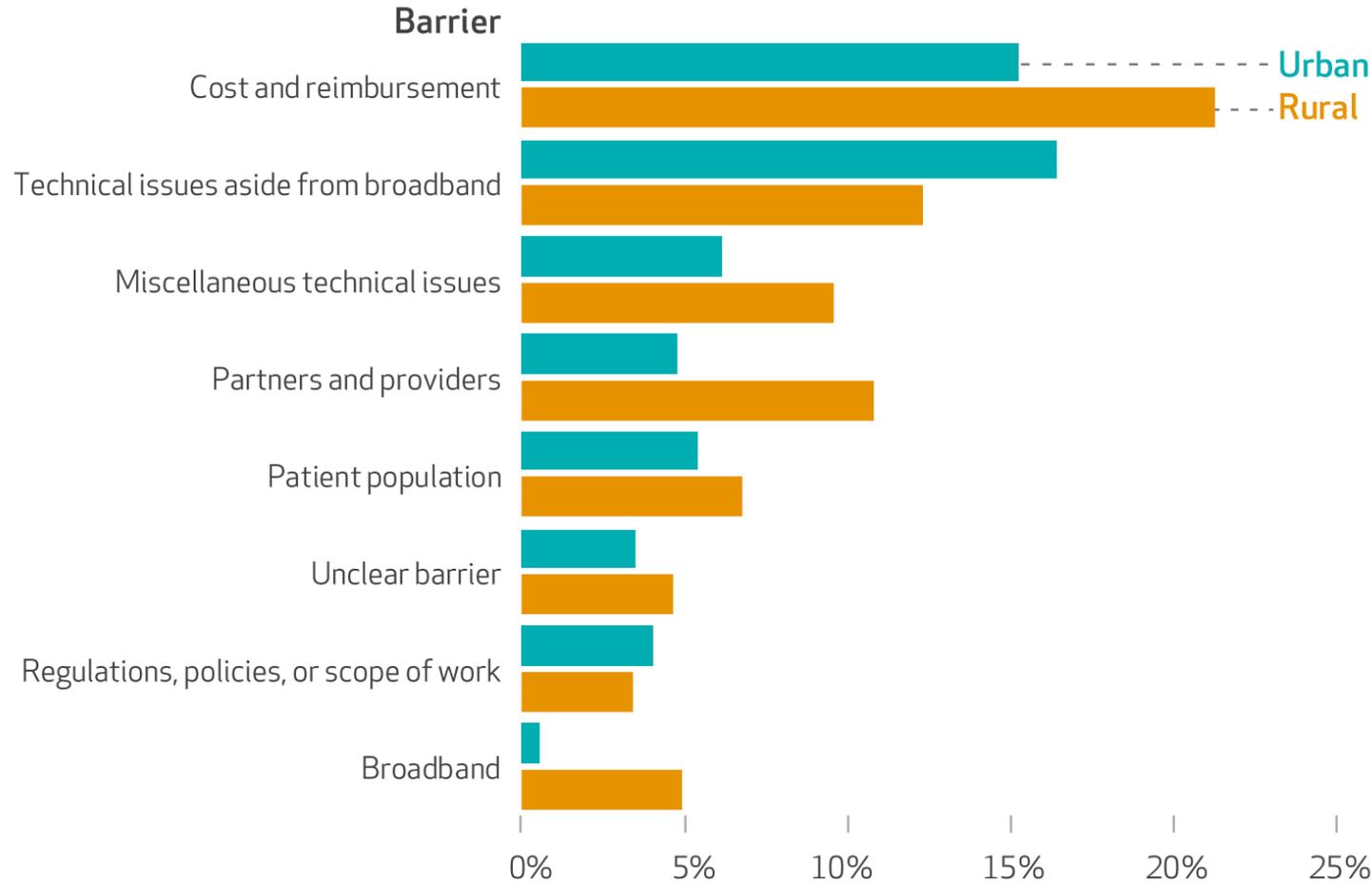
# Telemedicine in California Safety-Net Organizations

Figure. Primary Care and Behavioral Health Visits per 1000 Patients by Visit Type From February 2019 Through August 2020



**EXHIBIT 4**

**Percent of community-based health centers not using telehealth, by urban/rural status and barriers to use cited, 2016**



# Pre-COVID Reasons for Low Adoption

**SOURCE** Authors' analysis of data for 2016 from the Uniform Data System. **NOTES** N = 844. Health centers are those funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (see the text).

## Other Common Telehealth Restrictions

The specialty that telehealth services can be provided for

The types of services or CPT codes that can be reimbursed (inpatient office, consult, etc.)

The types of providers that can be reimbursed (e.g. physician, nurse, etc.)

## Telephone/Audio-Only Service Delivery

**5** states have added a permanent allowance for some type of telephone/audio-only delivered health care services since the COVID-19 emergency began. The addition of telephone was one of the most common COVID-19 temporary telehealth policy expansions, however not many states have taken the step to make this permanent.

## Private Payer Reimbursement

**43** States and the District of Columbia have laws that govern private payer reimbursement of telehealth. Some laws require reimbursement be equal to in-person coverage, however most only require parity in covered services, not reimbursement amount. Not all laws mandate reimbursement.

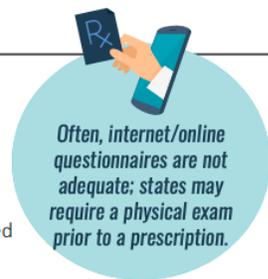
# Payor policies

## Consent

**41** States and D.C. have a consent requirement in either Medicaid policy, law or regulation. This number has increased by two since Spring 2020.

## Online Prescribing

Most states consider an online questionnaire only as insufficient to establish the patient-provider relationship and prescribe medication. Some states allow telehealth to be used to conduct a physical exam, while others do not or are silent. Some states have relaxed requirements for prescribing controlled substances used in medication assisted therapy (MAT) as a result of the opioid epidemic.



Often, internet/online questionnaires are not adequate; states may require a physical exam prior to a prescription.

More and more states are passing legislation directing healthcare professional boards to adopt practice standards for its providers who utilize telehealth. Medical and Osteopathic Boards often address issues of prescribing in such regulatory standards.

## Licensure

Eight state boards issue licenses related to telehealth allowing an out-of-state licensed provider to render services via telehealth. Licensure Compacts have become increasingly common. For example:

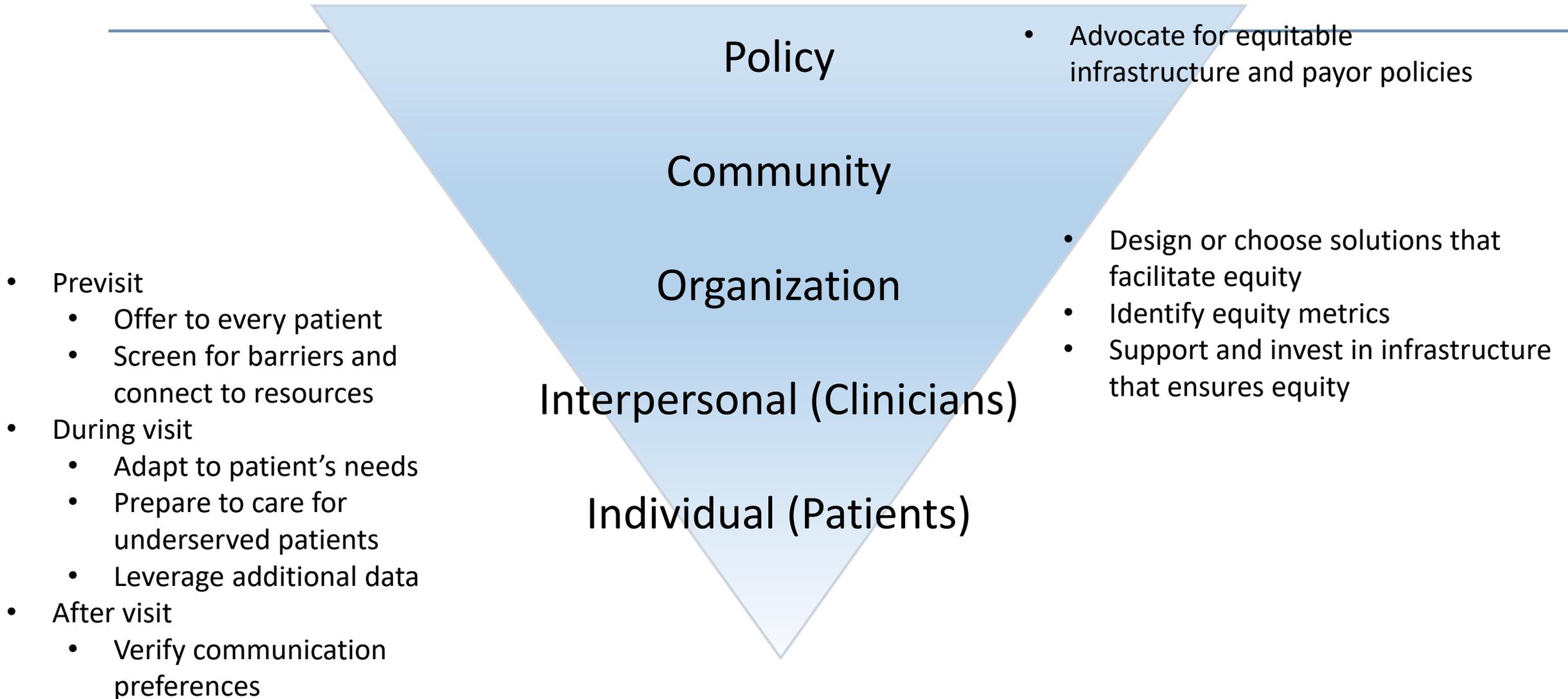
<p><b>28</b> States, D.C. &amp; Guam: Interstate Medical Licensure Compact</p>	<p><b>34</b> States: Nurse Licensure Compact</p>	<p><b>28</b> States: Physical Therapy Compact</p>	<p><b>15</b> States: Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT)</p>	<p><b>5</b> States: Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC)</p>	<p><b>20</b> States: Emergency Medical Services Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact (REPLICA)</p>
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**50** States and (D.C.)  
Medicaid programs reimburse for live video

<p><b>21</b> Medicaid programs reimburse for RPM</p>	<p><b>27</b> States and (D.C.) reimburse service to the home</p>	<p><b>26</b> States and (D.C.) reimburse services in the school-based setting</p>
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**18** Medicaid programs reimburse for S&F

# Solutions to Increase Telemedicine Equity



# Resources

- California Lifeline: <https://www.californialifeline.com/>
- Center for Care Innovations Telehealth Toolkit for Equity: <https://www.careinnovations.org/resources/telemedicine-for-health-equity-toolkit/>
- Center for Connected Health Policy: <https://www.cchpca.org/policy-trends/>
- FCC Broadband Benefit: <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>
- LEAP SF: Telehealth Resources for Intimate Partner Violence: <https://www.leapsf.org/html/index.shtml>
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance: <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/>
- NEJM Catalyst: Telemedicine Equity for Chronic Disease Management: <https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.20.0123>
- "Telehealth Equity: Before and After COVID-19" in Primary Care in the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://www.carequest.org/system/files/Primary-Care-in-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-Harvard-Report.pdf#page=251>
- Trauma-Informed Telehealth Care: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7473719/>
- UCSF Center for Vulnerable Populations: Telehealth in safety net settings: <https://cvp.ucsf.edu/telehealth>



Questions?

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## Questions & Answers

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**Thank you**