



The Physicians Foundation Announces The Telehealth Initiative to Improve Access to Quality Health Care

Initiative launches as the world grapples with surging demand for medical care in the midst of COVID-19

The Physicians Foundation, American Medical Association, Florida Medical Association, Massachusetts Medical Society and Texas Medical Association, today announced the launch of The Telehealth Initiative, which helps physicians implement telehealth services. With the current COVID-19 crisis, the organizations moved up the Initiative's launch to support physicians in their shift to telehealth models as a means to reduce exposure and minimize surges in care facilities.

The current COVID-19 crisis reinforces the need for physician access to practical resources that will enable them to operate telehealth services efficiently while facilitating positive care team and patient experiences. Through The Telehealth Initiative, physicians are able to participate in immersive evidence-based coaching that will help improve patient access, experience and outcomes while maintaining continuity of care when fully implemented.

The program helps participating physicians redesign their practices to successfully provide telehealth services to their patients. Additionally, the Initiative is providing free, online access to resources to encourage all physicians to consider telehealth services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Telehealth will help physicians respond to surges in sick patients needing care and protect non-infected patients with other acute or chronic conditions from potential exposure to the virus. Resources available include:

- [Considering Telemedicine in the Wake of COVID-19?](#)(TMA)
- [Telemedicine: The Changing Shape of Care Webinar](#)(TMA)
- [Telemedicine Vendor Options](#) (TMA)

- [Telemedicine Vendor Evaluation Tool \(TMA\)](#)
- [Policies, Procedures and Forms for Telemedicine Services \(TMA\)](#)
- [Making Telemedicine Work: Learn How Physicians are Using Telemedicine \(TMA\)](#)
- [Telemedicine Payments Promised, Regulations Eased \(TMA\)](#)
- [Massachusetts FAQs: Prescribing During Remote Telemedicine Practice \(MMS\)](#)
- [The Reality of Florida's New Telehealth Law \(FMA\)](#)
- [Florida COVID-19 Payment Resource \(FMA\)](#)
- [Telemedicine Quick Guide \(AMA\)](#)
- [Digital Health Implementation Playbook for Remote Patient Monitoring \(AMA\)](#)
- [Physician Innovation Network Telemedicine Discussion \(AMA\)](#)
- [STEPS Forward™ Module on Telemedicine \(AMA\)](#)

The Telehealth Initiative organizational leaders shared the following:

- “With our health care system confronting COVID-19’s unprecedented toll on the world, medical expertise is critical to flattening the curve and saving lives. Telehealth allows us to reach more patients while protecting our health care workforce,” said Gary Price, M.D., president of The Physicians Foundation. “In this time of uncertainty, The Physicians Foundation and our partners are committed to bringing together medical organizations across the country to put practical resources and tools in the hands of all physicians, so they are able to remain on the frontlines of protecting healthy people and treating those infected with COVID-19.”
- “The use of telemedicine and remote care services are critical to the safe management of the COVID-19 pandemic, while also ensuring uninterrupted care for 100 million Americans with chronic conditions,” said Patrice A. Harris, M.D., M.A., president of the American Medical Association (AMA). “The AMA strongly encourages the adoption of telemedicine as a responsible way for physicians to meet anticipated demands for care and treatment. The AMA also successfully advocated for revised federal policies that provide physicians with the maximum flexibility they need to provide remote care services. We applaud the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for taking these important steps. The AMA stands ready to help physicians with resources that provide physicians with a proven path for integrating telemedicine and digital health technologies into patient care.”
- “Telehealth will help Florida physicians provide more options for their patients and improve access to medical care in our state,” said Ronald Giffler, M.D., J.D., M.B.A., president of the Florida Medical Association (FMA). “The FMA is excited to be part of this initiative, which will allow us to better serve our members in a dynamic health care environment.”
- “The Massachusetts Medical Society is proud to partner with like-minded organizations to take a leadership role in educating our physician colleagues and accelerating the pace of adoption and implementation of telemedicine in health care so that appropriate care can be provided conveniently and safely for all patients,” said Maryanne C. Bombaugh, M.D., president of the Massachusetts Medical Society.
- “Physicians know how important it is for us to give our patients the option of obtaining safe, high-quality medical care digitally,” said David C. Fleeger, M.D., president of the Texas Medical Association (TMA). “TMA wants to provide tools and pragmatic guidance for physicians, so that we can embrace telemedicine and appropriately offer it to our existing patients and maintain continuity of care. The generous grant from The Physicians Foundation allows TMA to accelerate our work and get this information to physicians quickly, which is vital as we see COVID-19 take its grip on the public’s daily routine.”

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About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit seeking to advance the work of practicing physicians and help them facilitate the delivery of high-quality health care to patients. As the health care system in America continues to evolve, The Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to strengthen the physician-patient relationship and assist physicians in sustaining their medical practices in today's practice environment. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities including grant-making, research, white papers and policy studies. Since 2005, the Foundation has awarded numerous multi-year grants totaling more than \$50 million. In addition, the Foundation focuses on the following core areas: physician leadership, physician wellness, physician practice trends, social determinants of health and the impact of health care reform on physicians and patients. For more information, visit physiciansfoundation.org.

About the American Medical Association

The American Medical Association (AMA) is the powerful ally and unifying voice for America's physicians, the patients they serve, and the promise of a healthier nation. The AMA attacks the dysfunction in health care by removing obstacles and burdens that interfere with patient care. It reimagines medical education, training, and lifelong learning for the digital age to help physicians grow at every stage of their careers, and it improves the health of the nation by confronting the increasing chronic disease burden. For more information, ama-assn.org.

About the Florida Medical Association

The Florida Medical Association (FMA) is dedicated to serving and assisting Doctors of Medicine and Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine who practice in the state of Florida. The FMA represents more than 25,000 members on issues of legislation and regulatory affairs, medical economics and education, public health, and ethical and legal issues. We advocate for physicians and their patients in order to promote the public health, ensure the highest standards of medical practice, and enhance the quality and availability of health care in the Sunshine State. For more information, visit flmedical.org.

About the Massachusetts Medical Society

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) is the statewide professional association for physicians and medical students, supporting 25,000 members. We are dedicated to educating and advocating for the physicians of Massachusetts and patients locally and nationally. A leadership voice in health care, the MMS contributes physician and patient perspectives to influence health-related legislation at the state and federal levels, works in support of public health, provides expert advice on physician practice management, and addresses issues of physician well-being. Under the auspices of the [NEJM Group](#), the MMS extends our mission globally by advancing medical knowledge from research to patient care through the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), [NEJM Catalyst](#), and the [NEJM Journal Watch](#) family of specialty publications, and through our education products for health care professionals: [NEJM Knowledge+](#), [NEJM Resident 360](#), and our accredited and comprehensive continuing medical education programs.

About the Texas Medical Association

The Texas Medical Association (TMA) is the largest state medical society in the nation, representing more than 53,000 physician and medical student members. It is located in Austin and has 110 component county medical societies around the state. TMA's key objective since 1853 is to improve the health of all Texans. For more information, visit texmed.org.