

FACTSHEET

VA



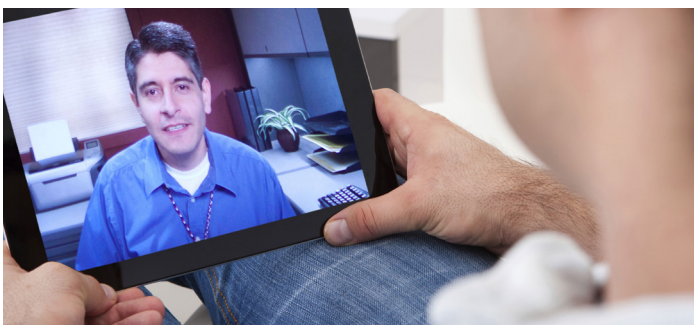
U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VHA TELEHEALTH SERVICES

INCREASING ACCESS

Operating the nation's largest health care system, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) uses a wide variety of technologies to ensure excellence in care delivery. New technologies are revolutionizing health care, and VA is recognized as a world leader in the development and use of telehealth. Telehealth services are mission-critical to the future direction of VA care to Veterans.

Telehealth increases access to high-quality health care services by using information and telecommunication technologies to provide health care services when the patient and the practitioner are separated by geographical distance. VA is committed to increasing access to care for Veterans, and has placed special emphasis on those in rural and remote locations.



Telehealth is Transformational

Telehealth is one of VA's major transformational initiatives, aimed at ensuring that care is convenient, accessible and patient-centered. In fiscal year 2018, 13% of Veterans who received care in the VA received care via telehealth.

Telehealth in VA provides mission-critical services that helps Veterans to live independently in their own homes or communities.

VA providers and patients determine together which telehealth care services are available in their location and are clinically appropriate for the patient to opt into. Veterans can elect to have traditional in-person care instead of telehealth.

Synchronous

The use of real-time, interactive video conferencing, sometimes with supportive peripheral technologies, to assess, treat and provide care to a patient remotely. Typically the patient, at a clinic, is linked to a provider at another location. Synchronous telehealth can also provide video connectivity between a provider and a patient who is at home or other non-VA location. VA's synchronous telehealth encompasses over 50 clinical applications, such as mental health, primary care and specialty care.

Asynchronous

Generally defined as the use of technologies to acquire and store clinical information (e.g., data, image and sound) which is then forwarded to, or retrieved by a provider at another location for clinical evaluation. VA operationalizes this definition to cover services such as retinopathy screening and dermatology, that provide this care using a clinical consult pathway and a defined information technology platform to communicate the event/encounter between providers, as well as enabling documentation of the event/encounter and the associated clinical evaluation within the patient record.

Remote Patient Monitoring

A program, in which Veterans with chronic conditions (e.g., hypertension or diabetes) can opt to enroll, that applies care and case management principles to coordinate care through health informatics, disease management and technologies, such as in-home mobile monitoring, messaging and video technologies. The goal is to improve clinical outcomes and access to care while reducing complications, hospitalizations and clinic or emergency room visits for Veterans in post-acute care settings, high-risk Veterans with chronic disease and Veterans at risk of placement in long-term care.

Robust and Sustainable

Telehealth is an effective and convenient way for patients to receive, and for clinicians to provide, VA care. VA has implemented national telehealth quality and training resources to ensure local services from more than 900 VA locations and in over 50 specialty areas of care.

Telehealth is Visionary

Telehealth in VA is the forerunner of a wider vision in which the relationship between patients and the health care system is changed with the full realization of the **connected patient**. The high levels of patient satisfaction and positive clinical outcomes attest to this.

In FY18, VHA provided more than **2.29 million episodes of care** to more than **782,000 patients** via the three telehealth modalities. This represents a **7.5% increase**, over the previous year, in the number of Veterans receiving care via VHA's telehealth services. More than 45% of these Veterans lived in rural areas, and may otherwise have had limited access to VA healthcare.

More than 393,000 Veterans used synchronous real-time telehealth, up 16.9% compared with FY17. More than **28,600 Veterans** received a video visit **into their home or other place of choice**. This is a **113% increase over FY17**.

More than 319,800 Veterans - 40% of whom live in rural areas - used asynchronous store-and-forward telehealth.

More than 136,700 Veterans were enrolled in Remote Patient Monitoring; 36% of these Veterans live in rural areas.

Of all the Veterans who are receiving care in VHA, roughly 13% of them have received some kind of care using VA telehealth.

Telehealth training for VA Physicians and other Clinicians is typically completed virtually. In FY18, over **100,720 trainings** were completed, and more than 36,650 staff attended at least one training session.

Telehealth supported emergency relief efforts after hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Florence. VA continues to leverage telehealth to assure the execution of VA's Fourth Mission to improve the Nations preparedness for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies and natural disasters



Regional and National Hubs

Eleven TeleMental Health hubs provide video mental health appointments.

Eleven VA TelePrimary Care hubs support delivery of primary care.

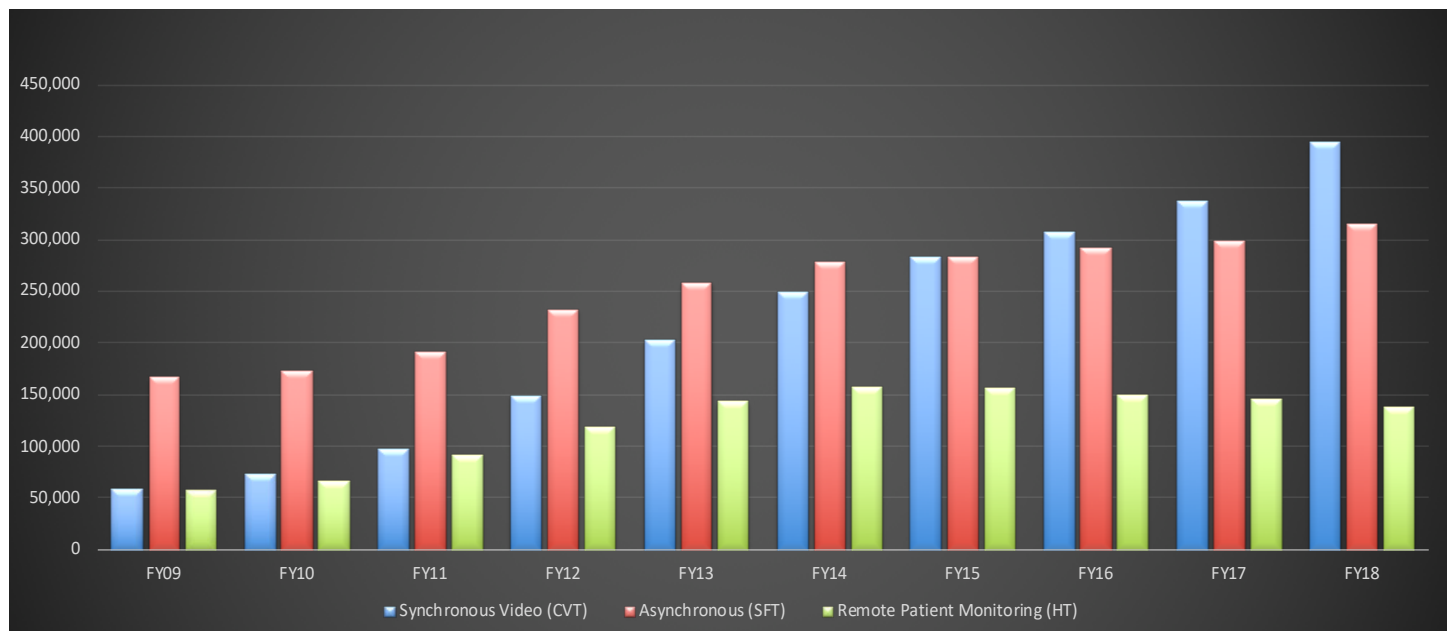
Two VA TeleICU centers, in Minneapolis and Cincinnati, provide additional support to Veterans in approximately 360 out of 1,700 VA intensive care unit (ICU) beds across the nation. Support is also provided to an additional 180 monitored beds (step-down, Emergency Department, etc.).

A National TeleStroke program provides expert consultation 24/7 to VA facilities that lack this expertise.

VA's TeleGenomic Medicine Services, based in Utah, provides genomic medicine and counseling service to Veterans throughout the country.

VA's National TeleMental Health Center, based in Connecticut, has provided national clinical expertise in affective, psychotic, anxiety and substance use disorders, as well as neurology treatment, to more than 6,100 Veterans in the last eight years..

Veterans Receiving Telehealth



Telehealth Outcomes

Improved patient outcomes resulting in reduced use of inpatient care in FY18

■ Veterans enrolled in Remote Patient Monitoring had a 53% decrease in VA bed days of care and a 33% decrease in VA hospital admissions.

■ Mental Health services provided via synchronous TeleMental Health reduced Acute Psychiatric VA bed days of care by 40% and VA hospital admissions by 34%.

■ **Patient satisfaction** scores for Remote Patient Monitoring are 89%. Synchronous scores (at time of appointment) are 90%. Synchronous home/mobile scores (at time of appointment) are 88%. Asynchronous, store-and-forward, scores are 88%.

Learn more info at: www.telehealth.va.gov