Virtual Visits

There is a lot of confusion about virtual visits. I've given a brief overview of each below, system-wide SmartPhrases with required documentation, and I attached a tip sheet with the billing codes for the different types of virtual visits. **Patients must consent for all types of virtual visits**.

Currently, **Phone (Virtual Check-Ins)** or **Video (Telehealth)** visits are the only options available for most MultiCare providers. E-visits are only available through the Virtual Urgent Care which is currently using these to screen patients for symptoms of COVID-19 and direct them to testing sites or appropriate self-care.

Part of the requirement for virtual visits is to document the State you and the patient are each in. With the Coronavirus pandemic, HHS has relaxed the rules about providers being licensed in the State where the patient is. For RWC providers, there is a compact that lets us "see" patients in northern Idaho.

Phone

Medicare defines **Virtual Check-Ins** as brief encounters to exchange information between a provider and an **established patient**. They should not be related to a visit within the past 7 days and should not lead to a visit within the next 24 hours. Medicare expects these to be requested by the patient – just like when they schedule an office appointment.

Use the Office Visit encounter if you are going to do a patient visit by phone, not a Telephone encounter. Office Visits have all of the required tools in Epic for documenting and coding. Your receptionist can schedule these so they show up on your Schedule using:

- Phone Consult [404] – creates Office Visit on your Epic Schedule

Alternatively, if already scheduled with a typical in-office visit type, it is fine to go ahead and just use it as scheduled.

If a provider is creating an "Encounter on the Fly" (i.e. a non-scheduled appt) to use for a phone visit with a patient, use "Office Visit" or "Urgent Care Visit" in the _Encounter_ Type field. DO NOT USE TELEPHONE ENCOUNTER.

Sample SmartPhrase: **.phonevirtualvisit**

Video

Medicare requires **Telehealth Visits** to use interactive audio-visual telecommunication. They have the **same requirements for documentation and billing as in-person visits**. These visits are available using the Lifesize platform. Lifesize is the preferred, secure video visit solution available at MultiCare. Documentation of the visit is done in Epic. These visits can be scheduled by your staff just like regular office visits using:

- Virtual Visit [8000] – Video visit using Lifesize or other conferencing platform

- MyChart Virtual Visit [1979] – Video visit using Epic MyChart

Please remember that there is very limited capacity to do these using MyChart and the **preferred platform at this time is Lifesize**. MultiCare Virtual Health has been working on rolling out the Lifesize platform to interested providers. Virtual Health Intake Form

Here are some **pearls for video visits** from video trailblazers: position the camera at eye-level, look into the camera or narrate what you're doing in Epic, remove clutter behind you, try to create the atmosphere of a regular in-person visit (introduce yourself, confirm you have the correct patient, wear your white coat and name badge, etc.) and particularly in these difficult times, remember to **smile**. Your patient will appreciate it.

Sample SmartPhrase: **.videovirtualvisit**

E-Visits
Medicare defines E-visits as the provider communicating electronically with an established patient who initiated the contact through an online platform. Zipnosis is MultiCare's preferred platform. Communication is asynchronous (like email) and can occur over 7 days. These are billed based on time but the patient must consent. Remember, **e-visits are only available through Virtual Urgent Care.**

SmartSets for COVID-19
- COVID-19 Screening [3050] SmartSet - created for use by UCC/Ambulatory back office staff at designated testing sites including when patients referred from E-visits or PCPs
- Upper Respiratory Infection Express Lane / SmartSet [2101030043] - now includes COVID-19 documentation templates, lab order, patient instructions, and letter templates.

Testing
There are two separate orders for COVID-19 testing. Patients with previous positive COVID results should not be retested.

Order Name	Collection Kit
COVID 19 PCR for Ambulatory, Lower Acuity ED, Staff, 1ST Resp. [87798I]	Combo Nasal + Throat (Oropharyngeal) Swabs In PBS/Saline
COVID 19 PCR for IP, Higher Acuity ED [87798K]	NP (Nasopharyngeal) Swab in Viral Transport Media

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