

Telehealth for Beginners: What You Need to Know to Get Started



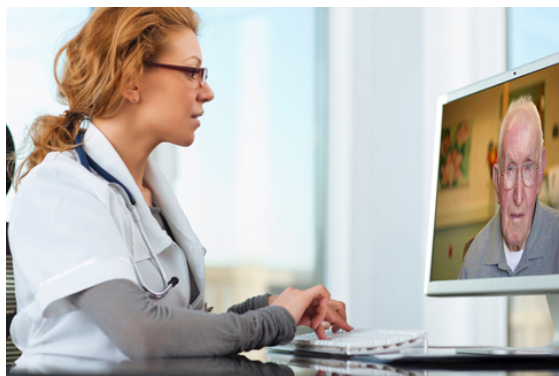
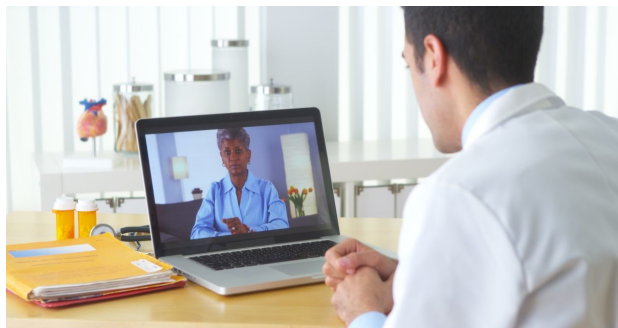
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What is telemental health?

- The use of interactive real-time (synchronous) technologies such as videoconferencing to deliver mental health care to patients (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2019)



Telehealth equipment



Research Supporting Telemental Health

- Effective across various populations and disorders^{1,2}
 - Depression, PTSD, anxiety disorders, substance use, and others
- Effective for adults and children¹⁻³
- Effective across racial/ethnic groups^{2,3}
- Effective in U.S. and globally⁴
- As effective as in-person treatment⁵
- High satisfaction^{5,6}

1. Hilty, D.M., Ferrer, C., Burke Parish, M., Johnston, B., Callahan, E., & Yellowlees, P. (2013). The effectiveness of telemental health: A 2013 Review. *Telemedicine & e-Health*, 444-454.
2. Gloff, N., LeNoue, S., Novins, K., & Myers, K. (2015) Telemental health for children and adolescents, *International Review of Psychiatry*, 27, 513-524
3. Stewart, R.W., Orenco-Aguayo, R., Gilmore, A.K., & de Arellano, M. (2017). Addressing barriers to care among Hispanic youth: Telehealth delivery of Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). *The Behavior Therapist*, 40, 112-118.
4. Acharibasam, J. & Wynn, R. (2018). Telemental Health in Low-and Middle Income Countries: A systematic review. *International Journal of Telemedicine and Applications*, 1-10.
5. Barshur, R., Shannon, G., Barshur, N., & Yellowlees, P. (2016). The empirical evidence for telemedicine interventions in mental disorders. *Telemedicine and e-Health*, 22, 1-27.
6. Whealin, J., King, L., Shore, P., & Spira, J. (2017). Diverse veterans' pre-and post-intervention perceptions of home telemental health for posttraumatic stress disorder delivered via tablet. *International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*, 52, 3-20.



Which patients should utilize telehealth?

- Assess level of risk (suicidal ideation, self-injury, etc.)
- Physical safety (externalizing disorders, ADHD, etc.)
- Age (young children)
- **Standard of care for telehealth is the same as in person treatment.**
- If a clinician cannot provide the same standard of care, he/she should not provide telehealth services.



Videoconference Platform

- HIPAA Compliant
 - Regulations during the COVID-19 Crisis <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>
 - FaceTime, Skype
 - Not allowed: Facebook Live, TikTok, Twitch
- Easy to use for clinician and patient
- Examples
 - Zoom for healthcare
 - VidyoConnect
 - VSee
 - Doxy.me



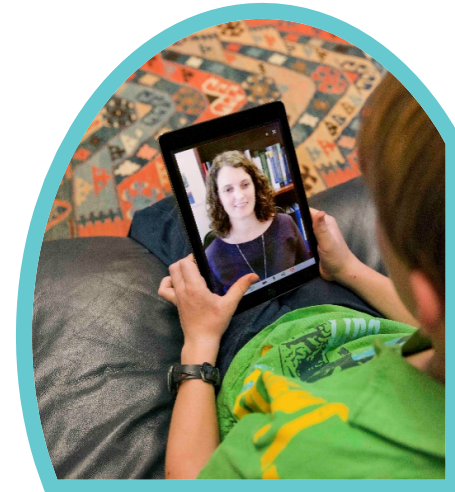
doxy.me

VidyoConnect™

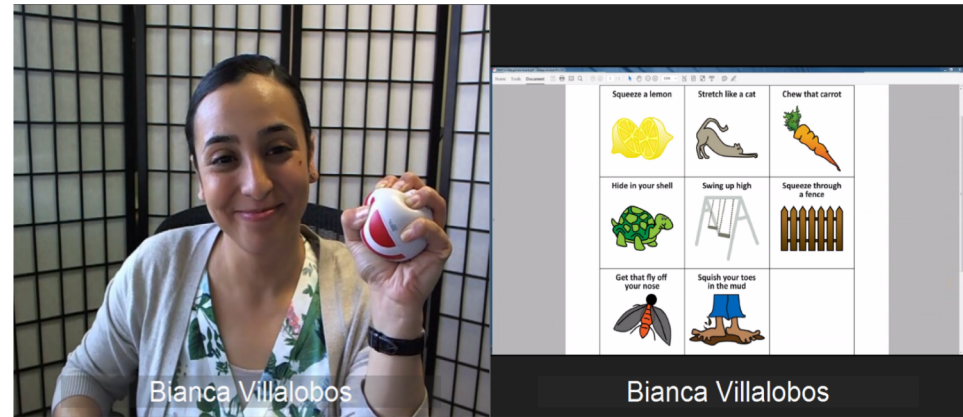
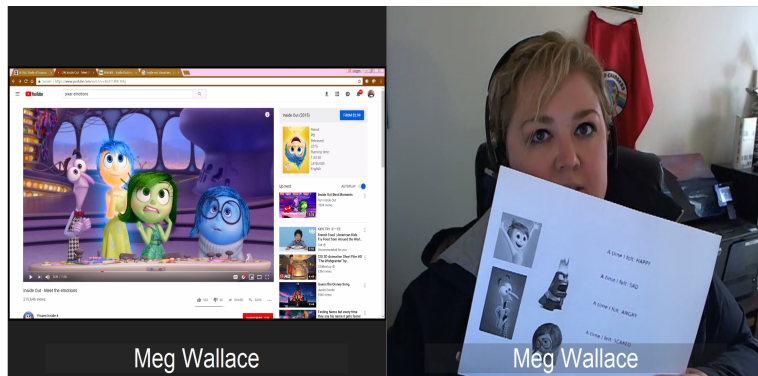
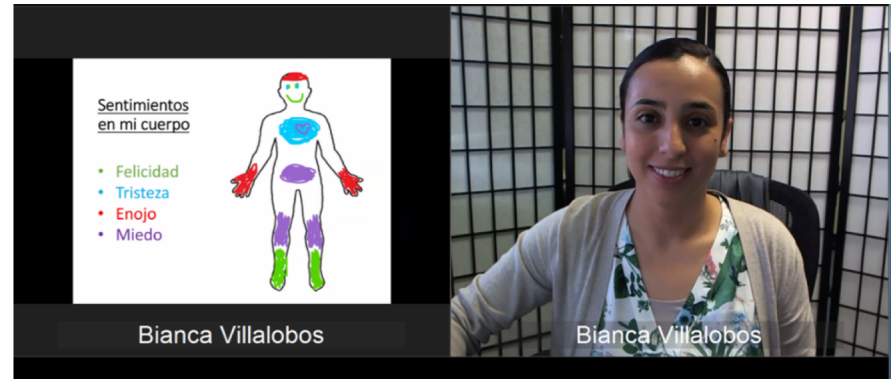
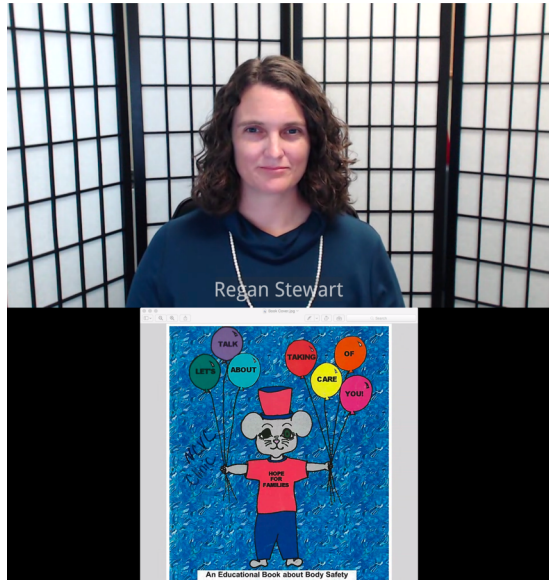


Equipment Needed

- Clinician
 - Computer (desktop or laptop)
 - Web camera
 - Headset with microphone (recommended)
 - Reliable internet connection
- Patient
 - Computer, tablet, or smart phone
 - Reliable internet connection



How does it work?



Review Relevant Telehealth Guidelines

- **State telehealth guidelines and regulations**
- American Telemedicine Association
 - <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/telepsychiatry/blog/apa-and-ata-release-new-telemental-health-guide>
 - https://www.americantelemed.org/resource_categories/practice-guidelines/
- American Psychological Association
 - <https://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/telepsychology>
- American Psychiatric Association
 - <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/telepsychiatry/toolkit/practice-guidelines>
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
 - https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Clinical_Practice_Center/Business_of_Practice/Telepsychiatry/Telepsych_Home.aspx



Are telemental health services billable/reimbursable?

- Check with your billing department or state regulatory bodies to determine if telemental health is reimbursable and by which types of providers.
 - Medicare - <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/president-trump-expands-telehealth-benefits-medicare-beneficiaries-during-covid-19-outbreak>
- Utilize correct modifiers and codes to indicate telehealth delivery modality
- Include telehealth specific information in therapy billing notes
 - Location of clinician and patient
 - Videoconference platform utilized
 - “This encounter was completed using real-time videoconferencing directly with the patient, connecting from a remote access site to the patient’s home.”



Considerations for Clinicians & Patients

- Clinicians
 - Private location
 - Background
 - Ensuring identity and location of patient
 - Emergency procedures
- Patients
 - Private location
 - For children, caregiver at the home location
 - Do's and don't for telehealth (not sitting on bed, fully dressed, etc.)



Informed Consent/Consent for Treatment

- Do you have existing consent for treatment?
- Do you need specific telehealth consent?
 - You may or may not have to have written consent for tele treatment. Check with your local licensing board.
- Consider electronic consent options (e.g., DocuSign)
- Verbal consent
 - Always consult with your local regulatory bodies
 - “I obtained verbal consent from the patient to provide this service through virtual electronic communication. The patient verbally authorizes the release of any medical information required to process for submission for financial coverage, including services provided during this visit and understands they are responsible for charges not covered by insurance/benefits.”



Next Steps

- › Contact your local licensing board for updated regulations and approvals regarding telehealth
- › Review telehealth guidelines
- › Assess technology (clinician & patient)
- › Determine informed consent protocol
- › Determine safety protocol
- › Determine platform & help patients navigate (downloading app or clicking link, etc.)
- › Pilot with 1-2 patients to work out the kinks and then expand

