



COVID-19 PATIENT PRIMARY CARE SURVEY

SERIES 9 FIELDLED OCTOBER 7- NOVEMBER 2, 2021



Despite the added challenges in care delivery during the pandemic, the vast majority of patients (85%) reported that primary care clinicians adapted to make care accessible without sacrificing holistic care - i.e., consideration of the complete person in the management of their health. Over 3/4 of patients stated that primary care was there for them during the pandemic. Telehealth visits were a common option during the pandemic, with 60% of respondents having either a phone or video primary care visit. Virtual care increased accessibility without significant disparities between age groups and location, yet only half of respondents believed their care was informed by the knowledge of their community. Quality and accessibility of healthcare could improve if the continued option of telehealth were combined with care informed by knowledge of the community.

Primary care was there for its patients during the pandemic, both providing routine care, coordinating care across multiple specialties, and filling gaps.

- 85% said primary care made it easy for me to get care
- 75% said primary care helped to coordinate care from multiple offices
- 13% said primary care was there to help when they couldn't see a specialist

Telehealth visits increased access to healthcare with little difference based on location or age.

- 29% found it easier to talk to their clinician because it was by phone.
- Among those who found phone-based care easier:
 - 30% of people in rural areas vs 27% of people in urban/suburban areas
 - 32% of people 65 years or over vs 29% younger than 65 years
- 36% found it easier to do a visit on video from home than in person
 - 36% of people in rural areas vs 35% of people in urban/suburban areas
 - 28% of people 65 years or over vs 37% younger than 65 years
- Although some people still preferred in person visits, others would like to keep telehealth visits as an option.
 - 35% of patients preferred in person care over telephone visits, while 38% would still like the option.
 - 32% of patients preferred in person care over video visits, while 37% would still like the option.

Patients view their primary care as holistic

- 87% said their doctor considers all factors that affect their health
- 76% feel their doctor knows them as a person
- 64% said their doctor takes into account knowledge of their family
- 54% said their care is informed by the knowledge of their community

Methods – Fielded by The Larry A. Green Center, in partnership with the Primary Care Collaborative and 3rd Conversation, this survey was offered through public posting on a survey website and open to people 18 years or older. This is a convenience sample, voluntary and anonymous, with enrollment becoming limited as it is filled to ensure diversity in respondent demographics. Fielded Oct 7- Nov 2, 2021

Sample – 1,546 respondents who are connected with a primary care clinician completed this survey. Rurality was determined by the self-reported area in which respondents live. Out of the total sample, 520 were rural, 656 were low-income. Demographics of general population sample: 35% high school degree, 59% college or higher; 22% household income (HHI) < \$25k, 24% with HHI > \$100k. 22% urban, 44% suburban, 34% rural. 27% 18-34 years old, 34% were 55 or over. 40% male, 59% female. 19% unemployed. Out of all 1546 respondents, 60% have had a virtual visit during the pandemic.

“[Primary care] has given me hope and light at the end of a cold dark tunnel.” Iowa

What was your experience with primary care during the pandemic?

... primary care was there for me

- They are always here for me. *Colorado, Michigan*
- Always looking out for me. *Wyoming*
- He's been there to support me with all the COVID 19 things. *Maryland*
- My Doctor has gone the extra mile for me. *California*
- They help me get through this pandemic. *New Jersey*
- I was having issues not related to covid and I got the attention I needed. *Georgia*
- It's been terrifying dealing with the pandemic lately but I think my doctor has me well covered in case anything bad happens to me. *Texas*
- Went out of the way to check on me. *California*

... my primary care physician advocates for me

- They don't mind taking on the insurance company or the pharmacy to get you what you need. *Georgia*
- Advocating for the vaccine early for me since I had a chronic condition. *North Dakota*
- Listening to me and giving me a voice in my care. *Georgia*
- Getting me the meds I need if the insurance says no. *California*
- Supports my decisions. *Florida*
- Went above and beyond to get me my medicine. *Maryland*
- Helping me get charity care when I had no insurance. *North Carolina*
- would advocate for my choices. *California*
- Getting the medical supply company to get me what I really needed. *Massachusetts*
- If I have issues they would be there. *Wisconsin*
- Always accommodating and listens to my concerns about my prescription meds. *Arizona*

... my primary care doctor coordinates my care among specialists

- Will contact other doctors to help further care. *Ohio*
- They support me and coordinate my care. *Arizona*
- ...by trying to help me find a new therapist. *Maryland*
- She helped me get all the possible care I can while not having health insurance. *Alabama*

... my primary care physician provides holistic care

- ...by respecting me as an individual. *Florida*
- He takes into account my anxiety. *Colorado*
- She knows my beliefs and misunderstandings. *Maine*
- Giving true advice for me as an individual, not popular assessments. *Connecticut*
- They care for me as a person and not just a number or a source of income. *Oregon*
- It's great knowing that my health care provider cares deeply about my health and to me that matters the most. *Illinois*
- I had the best care in my doctors appointments. He was helpful in many ways, physical and emotional. *New York*

... primary care adapted to increase accessibility and safety of care

- If it wasn't for the concessions my doctor made to have zoom meetings, I wouldn't have received the care I needed. *Kentucky*
- Primary care came up with solutions to see and treat patients quickly. *Colorado*
- He changed how he saw people quickly so the level of care never declined. *Florida*
- They have definitely made changes to make everyone feel safe while also getting them the help they need. *Texas*
- My primary care always had the safety of staff and patients in mind. *Ohio*
- I was always able to get an appointment whenever I needed one. *New Jersey*
- I think they handled the pandemic well. *Connecticut*

... but for some it was harder to access in-person care due to pandemic conditions

- I feel helpless not being able to make an appointment to address serious health concerns. *Ohio*
- It has been more difficult to get timely return of phone calls or appointment scheduling due to the high volume of patients they are seeing. *Kentucky*
- My primary care seems to have forgotten that I exist. I have not had a physical since July 2019. *California*
- It was hard to even get an appointment to see the doctor during the pandemic. *Nebraska*
- They've refused to see people before they've received a negative covid test. *Alabama*
- My doctor has cut back on days where he's in the office. Appointments have to be made well in advance. *North Carolina*