Telehealth - Telephone Only Encounters

CMS allows services provided by *telephone only* to be billed when certain criteria are met (details below). Under COVID-19 this billable service includes both established and new patient encounters.

This is an option for when the patient is unable to connect to an audio/visual platform such as FaceTime or Zoom for a Telehealth visit. Established patients needing medication refills for a previously diagnosed condition is another example.

NOTE: Only time spent in medical discussion by the physician, PA or NP may be counted when selecting the code.

Telehealth – Telephone Only Encounter Codes		
Code	Description	Nat'l Medicare Reimbursement Rate
99441	5-10 minutes of medical discussion with physician, PA or NP	$ 14.44
99442	11-20 minutes of medical discussion with physician, PA or NP	$ 28.15
99443	21-30 minutes of medical discussion with physician, PA or NP	$ 41.14

Important Billing Criteria

- **The encounter must be scheduled or requested by the patient.** If requested by a physician, PA, or NP, the visit cannot be billed as a telephone virtual encounter.

- Only time spent in medical discussion by the physician, PA or NP may be counted when selecting the code.

- Verbal consent must be obtained and documented (script provided under documentation below).

- **These telephone codes are not billable if:**

  o The discussion relates to an in office or audio/visual E/M service that took place within the previous 7 days;

  o The call results in an E/M visit or procedure within the following 24 hours or soonest available appointment;

  o The discussion relates to a service for which there is an active, postoperative global period.

Documentation

- Ensure that encounter with the clinic Telehealth service location is created in NextGen PM with insurance attached.

- Document the amount of time the physician, PA or NP spent on medical discussion in the visit note.

- Document who the medical discussion was with. For example: patient, parent or guardian.

- Include the following consent in the visit note: "*Patient/parent/legal guardian verbally consented to the patient's telehealth audio encounter. Telephone encounter was performed due to coronavirus restrictions. The side effects, risks and benefits of treatment were discussed.*"

- Telephone codes do include review of patient photos by the physician/PA/NP. If photos were emailed, please upload to the patient's chart in addition to documenting the phone call details.
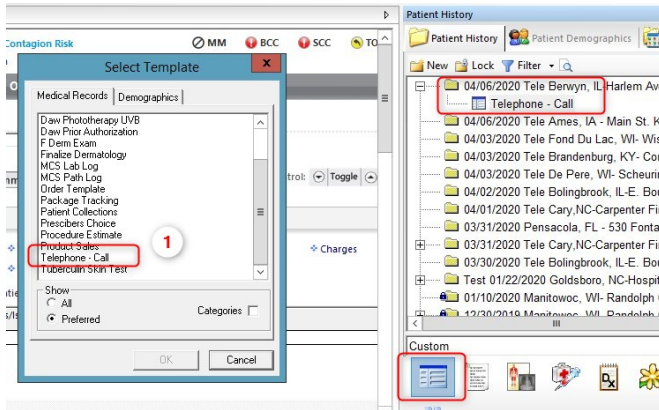
Helpful Tips

- For audio/visual visit (via FaceTime, Zoom, etc.), use E/M codes following the Telehealth Audio Visual Visits – E/M Coding guide and Billing will apply Telehealth modifiers.
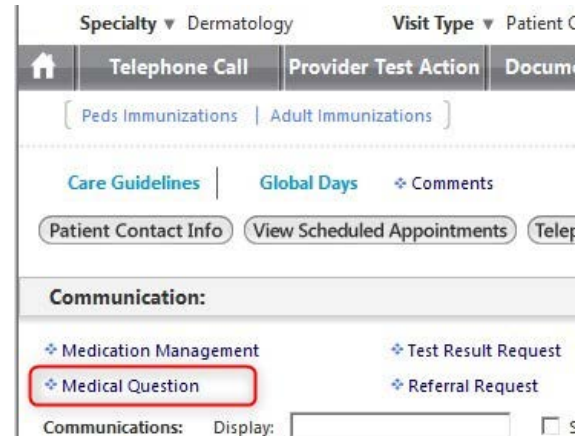
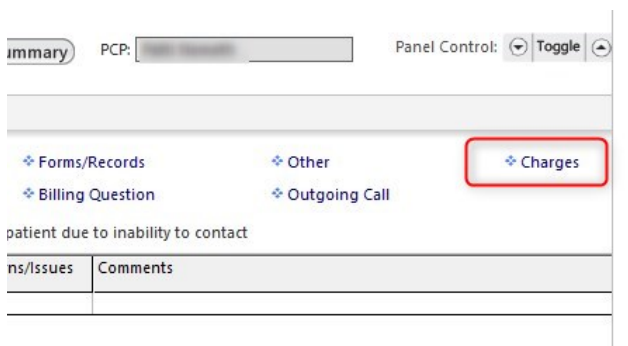# Telehealth - Telephone Only Encounters

NextGen

1. Lay a *Telephone-Call* template under the **Tele** EHR encounter and choose *Patient Communication* as visit type.
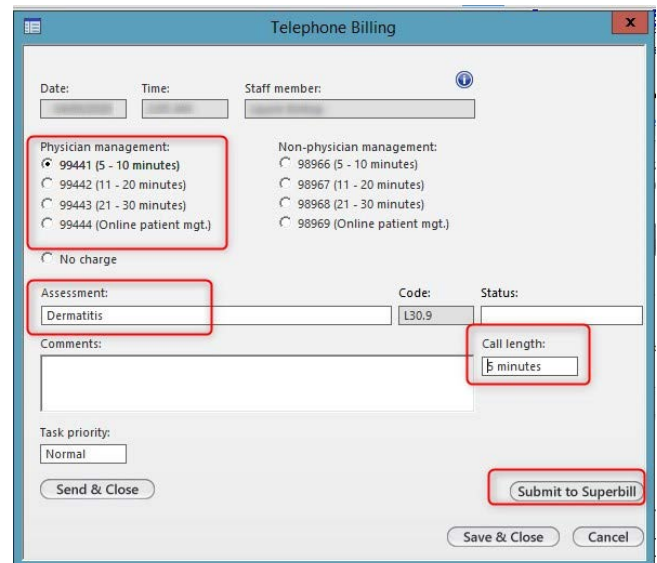

2. Select *Medical Question* link to document all details of the phone call and total time.

3. Select Charges link to enter diagnosis and select appropriate telephone code and Submit to Superbill.

4. Charge Screen:

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EMA

1. Select New Non-Visit Order and set facility to **Tele** clinic location.

2. Type telehealth consent in *Note* section.

Note

Patient/Parent/Legal guardian verbally consented to the patient's telehealth audio encounter. Telephone encounter was performed due to Coronavirus restrictions. The side effects, risks, and benefits of treatment were discussed.

3. Under Impressions and Plans, Select Manage to add each impression and plan for phone encounter in the VER.

4. Override Suggested E&M code and choose the appropriate telephone code based on time (listed out of numerical order after G codes).