



## **We are now offering telehealth services!<sup>1</sup>**

Good Samaritan Health Center of Cobb (GSHC) is now offering telehealth visits as an additional way to interact with you.

### **What is telehealth?**

The Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) defines Telehealth as the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support long-distance clinical health care and patient health-related education.<sup>2</sup> Telehealth is a digital health solution that connects the patient and clinician through real-time audio and video technology. It can be used as an alternative to traditional in-person care delivery, and, in certain circumstances, can be used to deliver care such as the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of patients.

### **What types of visits can telehealth be used for?**

- **Medical** telehealth is best suited for adult and pediatric chronic care management and sick visits (“walk-in”) with **established patients** who do not require a physical exam or lab work. Examples would be insulin adjustments, review of continuous glucose monitoring data, follow-up after a medication change, new symptoms that do not require in-person assessment.
- **Behavioral health** telehealth is best suited for interactions with **established patients** who are not in crisis (homicidal and/or suicidal) and who have scored less than 15 on both PHQ-9 and GAD-7 assessments.
- **Nutritional health education** telehealth is best suited for interactions with both **new and established patients** with **diabetes** who are referred by a primary care provider for nutritional counseling.

**If during a telehealth visit, a provider determines that a patient needs to have an in-person assessment based on the interaction, an in-person appointment will be scheduled.**

### **What types of visits are not appropriate for telehealth?**

- Telehealth cannot be used for new-patient (adult and pediatric) medical evaluations
- For behavioral health, in-person new-patient visits are preferred but telehealth options may be granted on a case-by-case basis
- Telehealth is not suited for physical examination and lab testing. Examples of services that require in-person evaluation include annual well child checks, sports physicals, and A1C testing.

- **What are benefits of telehealth?**

Benefits of telehealth include:

- Increased convenience: Care when you need it, from the comfort of your home
- No transportation time or costs
- Better patient experience: No waiting rooms or long lines. Less risk of spreading or contracting infectious disease

### **What is needed to connect for an online appointment?**

You will need a smartphone that can receive text messages and allows you to connect to the HIPPA compliant telehealth platform, a video camera and a microphone. Headphones are optional but preferred. At your appointment time, you will receive a text message with instructions to join the telehealth platform for the visit. You must press the link provided in the body of the text message to join the telehealth visit with audio and video.

### **Consent to treat you via telehealth**

You will need to complete a telehealth consent, allowing our office to conduct a telehealth appointment

### **How are the telehealth visits billed?**

After your telehealth visit, you will receive a bill in the mail from GSHC with instructions for payment. Telehealth visits with audio and video are billed the same as in-person visits.

### **What do I need to do to prepare?**

- Prepare for the telehealth at visit 15 minutes before the visit is scheduled to begin  
Make sure you have a smartphone with a good-quality camera and microphone.  
Headphones are optional but preferred. Double check your camera for clarity

- A private space (You should be in a room alone without children, spouses, other family members or friends to maintain privacy of the interaction)
- Limited background noise (Noise from televisions, radios, and people should be limited)
- Good lighting (Surrounding lights should be turned on)

**What should I expect before my first telehealth visit?**

- You will be asked to consent to receive telehealth care
- You will be asked to verify your name and contact information

**What should I expect in my first telehealth visit?**

- Your encounter with your provider will be as similar as possible to a typical in-person visit
- Our care team will be able to help arrange follow-up care and prescription orders

**What should I expect *after* my telehealth visit?**

- You will receive a bill in the mail from with instructions for payment.
- Our care team will contact you by phone to schedule your next appointment

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-04/ama-telehealth-playbook.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.healthit.gov/fag/what-telehealth-how-telehealth-different-telemedicine>