



Frequently Asked Questions:

A New Norm, Accessing Health-Care in a Virtual World



What is the difference between “Telemedicine” and “Virtual Primary Care?”

Telemedicine, as the term implies, is the practice of medicine via telecommunications equipment. In other words, it is seeing your doctor via a videoconferencing app similar to Skype or FaceTime.

Telehealth is a broader term that includes telemedicine and other healthcare disciplines, although the term telehealth is sometimes used interchangeably with telemedicine.

The term virtual healthcare is a synonym for telehealth or telemedicine, and it is often used along with telemedicine.

Telemedicine isn't new. It was initially developed decades ago to provide access to healthcare to remote populations such as rural population hundreds of miles from healthcare facilities, individuals temporarily assigned to or stationed in locations without access to healthcare such as astronauts in space ships or stations, scientists deployed to Antarctica, and sailors traversing large oceans often away from civilizations for a month or two. Satellite phones were the first equipment used and since, it evolved to include still images, then live video. As video-chatting became a commonplace nowadays, telemedicine fills the space nicely next to video-chatting for casual and business activities, further extending its capabilities to include the delivery of healthcare.

Today, telemedicine included on most medical plans is focused on episodic care. A patient has a specific medical concern or need and the provider addresses that need ONLY during the consultation. In most telemedicine programs, patients do not see the same provider or have continuity of care from provider to provider.

Virtual Primary Care is a true DPC or Direct Primary Care membership. This membership based model aligns the providers interest with the interest of the user and purchase of healthcare (employers and their employees). Akos charges a monthly per employee per month fee to deliver an all access pass to a dedicated primary care provider for each employee. Each member receives a dedicated Care Navigator to make sure members receive the right care, at the right time at the most appropriate location and at the fair price.

Virtual Primary Care delivers continuity of care, unlike most telemedicine programs, by fostering a relationship between a patient and the Akos primary care provider. Continuity of care is so important to achieving LONG TERM results around improved health and outcomes. Akos primary care providers also have the time to deliver an exceptional membership experience and help their patients manage chronic disease – like diabetes, hypertension, COPD and Asthma.



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What is different about Akos that allows you to get better results for employer groups?

Akos delivers a complete healthcare solution to employers and their employees. Our services include both a health benefits function where the funding mechanism is the employer sponsored healthcare plan as well as a workers' comp program where the funding mechanism is the workers' comp insurance product. This is a very unique structure that breaks down the silos typically associated with these two funding mechanisms.

Akos Virtual Primary Care solution combines the important pieces of a value based primary care strategy as a foundation of a high-performance healthcare plan. We put a primary care provider and care navigator at the center of this solution and facilitate a 1:1 relationship with an employee.

Key components that are structurally different that allows us to get better results include:

- 1:1 relationship with primary care physician
- 1:1 relationship with care navigator
- Comprehensive onboarding process that includes a health risk assessment and connectivity to patients current providers.
- "Interoperability" among employee (Akos patient) that pulls in health records, care plans and data on an on-going basis.
- Easy to use customer facing app and engagement tool to facilitate care
 - Phone
 - Video
 - Text
 - On-site or near-site Akos .ai powered clinic
- Chronic disease management both on the technology and provider side. Our providers are well versed in disease management and health coaching, our technology platform allows us to scale this to all Akos patients.
- Care Navigation competency and tools – the ability to guide patients to the right care, at the right time, at the right location and the fair price. Our company profile delivers the "rules of the plan" to our care navigation team, we leverage quality and cost data to facilitate – best in class care at the fair price.
- Data and reporting, including "zero dollar" claims to TPA.

Our Workers' Compensation program offers a modern closed-loop solution to an antiquated system with significant pitfalls and loopholes.

In the traditional system, the injured employee has to drive to the doctor with the supervisor and wait to be seen, wait for tests, then drive back, which easily took anywhere from two to several hours, possibly most of the day, for both the employee and the supervisor, then spend a significant amount of time chasing work release and other papers while the employee with a relatively minor injury was out of work for days or even weeks.

With Akos Workers' Compensation program, injured workers with relatively minor injuries that do not require immediate hands-on care, which is approximately 70 percent of workplace injuries, can be triaged and sent back to regular duty by nurses when the injury meets First-Aid definition by OSHA guidelines (30 percent of the time), or be seen by a provider within minutes after nurse triage and be treated via videoconferencing which may last approximately 15 minutes. Another significant benefit is that return-to-work and other relevant paperwork are forwarded electronically to the injured worker, the supervisor and all other designated recipients within 30 minutes of the encounter, and the injured worker is usually able to return to work in an alternate duty immediately. When the employee has an injury that requires an imaging study or labs, our providers can order the tests to be performed at the preferred provider locations, if any, or at one of Akos partner facilities, and our providers will follow up the results and reconnect with the injured worker within 24 to 48 hours for further care. If the injured employee needs physical therapy or any other rehabilitation service, the provider will send an order and follow the injured worker at regular intervals until ready to return to work. If they are found to have an injury that requires specialist's care such as an orthopedic surgeon or a neurologist, we will make the referral to the client's preferred network, or to an Akos network, if no preferred network is in place.

All in all, the time and cost savings are quite significant with the cost via telemedicine being just a fraction of the cost of the traditional system for a similar injury and drastically lowered downtime for the injured worker.



What if I have an employee that needs to see an in-person provider?

Akos primary care providers can diagnose and treat over 1500 conditions virtually. About 70-80% of the interactions that we have with our members happen from the comfort of their home or office. When Akos members need the attention of an "in-office" visit, a dedicated Care Navigator helps members with either orders, (Labs, Xrays, MRI, etc) or will provide an in-office referral to a high-quality provider to receive the care they need. The goal is to use the healthcare system in the most cost-effective way for the member and employer and return the member back to the Akos primary care provider for continuity of care and follow up.



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What about prescriptions?

Akos providers are able to diagnose, create a care plan and prescribe when appropriate. A prescription, if indicated, is sent to the pharmacy of patient's choice, electronically. Members might also opt to have this delivered to help patients remain at home and limit exposure.

Common medications including blood pressure or diabetes medications and antibiotics are routinely prescribed virtually, however, controlled substances are NOT among routinely prescribed medications via telemedicine. Therefore, if a member needs a prescription or refill of a controlled substance, we help the member receive and in-office visit with a provider to write these types of medications.



Is my Protected Health Information (PHI) Safe?

Akos takes security very seriously. Our systems include a 2-step authentication process with an email or text to a cell phone to validate membership information. All information entered by the patient into the app is encrypted and protected, therefore, safe as any other medical record located at physical healthcare facilities. Patients can request transcripts of consultation to telemedicine company, if needed.



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