

How virtual Healthcare can help the most vulnerable people

With the recent pandemic, it's hard not to be concerned with your own health and the health of your loved ones. Especially for those who are more vulnerable, such as the elderly and those who are immunocompromised, this pandemic is like their worst nightmares coming true. The best way to avoid getting sick is to avoid contact with others altogether through social-distancing and following other safety measures.

However, this isn't always practical. What if you need to go to the doctor? What if you need a prescription? These are services that requires you to head outside and make human contact with others, which is less than ideal when you consider those who go to the doctor's are also not feeling well in some manner. Even worse, hospitals are operating at or above their capacities, which means that going to get something looked at could take much longer than usual. For those whose situation is not serious enough to require a trip to a doctor's clinic or hospital but still need to get medical attention, what can they do?

Virtual Telemedicine.

Thankfully, even prior to the pandemic, there were telemedicine programs emerging as new services whether as part of a company's benefits plan, individually purchased, or even free as an alternative for those who do not have the former. This provides a method for people to see a doctor on their smartphones in the comfort of their own homes and receive the help they need whenever and wherever they want. This means having access to health care during evenings and weekends, avoiding travel and wait times, and less stress with booking and going to appointments.

What's great about these programs is that you are able to pre-book an appointment and you simply have to log on at your booked time and you'll be able to get in and see a doctor immediately. When you compare this to a doctor's office, many people often don't have a family doctor and need to go to a walk-in clinic, where wait times can range anywhere between from a few minutes or a few hours. This is especially valuable if you need something simple like a prescription refill as the doctor can directly send the prescription to a pharmacy of your choice and all you need to do is have pick it up.

Beyond being convenient for users, it provides a level of accessibility that otherwise would be a challenge for a range of people. For children and those with special needs, a doctor's visit can be a very stressful time and using virtual telemedicine avoids this stress altogether. For those who live in remote areas, or have chronic conditions that limits their movements, they do not need to make the difficult trip to a doctor's office. Even for doctors who are the most vulnerable due to the high risk of exposure from being at the front lines, any healthcare workers who find themselves quarantined due to mild sickness or other circumstances can choose to continue working from the safety of their home instead. Virtual healthcare also provides a method to help keep potential patients out of already over capacitated hospitals. It also saves time and a spot for emergency workers to help those who need them the most.

While there are limitations with virtual telemedicine services, the benefits greatly outweigh any concerns. As medical clinics begin to re-open, it is important that we continue to use virtual healthcare whenever we can so we can continue to utilize its advantages to ensure everyone can stay well and healthy.

