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COVID-19 Inpatient/Observation Telehealth

Recent Updates 6.23.2021

- Updated recommended telehealth solution to NMs Doximity and MS Teams standard.

In an effort to preserve our workforce, avoid unnecessary risk to our patients, to support social distancing, as well as to preserve our stocks of PPE for the expected inpatient surge in COVID-19 hospitalized patients over the upcoming weeks, **NM has enacted the following procedure for all physicians, APPs, and eligible care providers who are involved with the care of hospitalized patients:**

1. All initial encounters for primary service and consultation services for all patients, regardless of COVID-19 diagnosis, must be completed **in person**; the only exception to this is for select psychiatric patients who are appropriate for a tele-consult. “When seeing the patient don the appropriate PPE (for a COVID or suspected COVID patient) as usual.
2. If a physical examination will not alter management or recommendations, physicians, APPs, and care providers may utilize telehealth for follow-up encounters by the primary team and consulting services. We recommend the use of video when appropriate and accessible, though telephone-only can be used as well. When ready to begin, call into the room using a personal device or land lines at the nursing stations, introduce or identify yourself, explain the rationale for this process, and recommend that the encounter be done via Doximity, Microsoft Teams, or telephone assuming the provider and patient have access to appropriate technology.
3. There are specific dot phrases (.covid19phone, .covid19video) in Epic that identify these encounters for use under these exceedingly rare circumstances, and that must be documented in Epic to code and bill correctly.
4. A patient may decline to participate in a telephonic or video encounter or may not have a mobile device, in which case continue with a traditional encounter, while maintaining appropriate social distancing and using judgment regarding use of PPE (for COVID or suspected COVID patients) and performance of a physical examination.

Please visit the [COVID-19 Telehealth Resources page](#) on NMI for additional information including tip sheets on various technology solutions available for telehealth. Visit the [NMI Telehealth FAQs](#) page for answers to frequently asked questions.