

# Telehealth: Addressing the Growing Demand for Behavioral Health Services During COVID and Beyond

When the COVID-19 pandemic began spreading through the United States, prompted immediate shutdowns across the country and a declaration of the Public Health Emergency (PHE); Centerstone, the nation's largest not-for-profit behavioral health healthcare organization, quickly transitioned from a traditional, in-person services model to one that was predominately virtual.

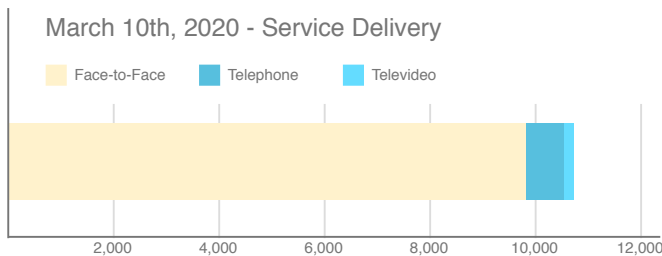
Following is a summary of this transition in terms of trends in utilization, clinical outcomes, and the patient experience that resulted from the pandemic – almost overnight – cutting decades of red-tape around virtual care delivery and launching the nation's largest ever trial period around digital care delivery.

## Before the PHE

< 5% of our service encounters delivered via telehealth

< 3% of our services for MAT clients delivered via telehealth

Majority of our 3,500+ employees worked in an **office setting**

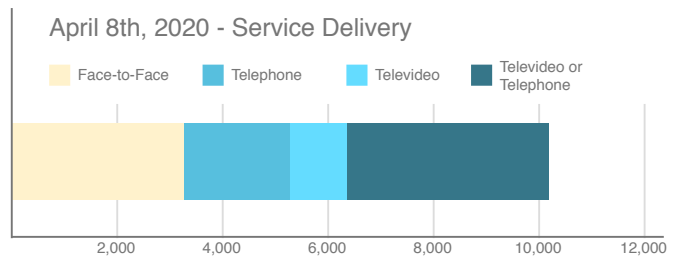


## After the PHE

> 80% of our service encounters delivered via telehealth within one month of the PHE

> 45% of our services for MAT clients now delivered via telehealth

Majority of our 3,500+ employees moved to a **remote work environment**



## Transitioning to Telehealth: Consumer Impact and Clinical Findings



"Grandmother who is caring for 3 preschool grandchildren so their mother can work often found it difficult to find someone to watch them so she could do in-office sessions to treat her mood disorder and prevent relapse to alcohol use. Because of audio only, she now never misses a weekly phone therapy session."



"Client who is care taking for a husband with Alzheimer's and a foster child. She found it challenging to get someone to care for her family members and drive the 45 minutes to my office. Doing telephone therapy has made life less stressful for and increased adherence in her own care."



Client satisfaction with outcomes, the ability to manage mental health, and depressive symptoms were **on par with face-to-face outcomes at 6 months.**

## A Growing Need for Telehealth Access

Now more than ever, continuing access to mental health and substance use disorder services via telehealth is crucial to manage the growing need now and after the PHE.



**Over 40 states** have seen a **rise in opioid-related overdose deaths** since the start of the pandemic.

**One in four** young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 say they've **considered suicide** because of the pandemic.

**From May to October 2020** Centerstone experienced a **44% increase in call volume** with more and more consumers reaching out for urgently needed help.

The pandemic ripple effects - social isolation, increasing unemployment, fear of becoming ill, the loss of loved ones - are projected to have lasting impacts on the rates of severe depression, anxiety, and substance use disorder for years to come.

**As a nation we must take action now to ensure we are equipped for an emerging mental health crisis. Continuing the emergency telehealth waivers can play a critical role toward ensuring patient access.**