

April 13, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

We write to update you on Arkansas Children's COVID-19 response. We, like many of you, are rapidly adjusting to challenging circumstances and working to overcome barriers to comprehensive pediatric care across the state. At the same time, we are deeply focused on taking care of our physicians and team members across the organization and ensuring they have what they need to prioritize safety, excellence, teamwork and compassion.

Complying with national guidelines and industry recommendations, Arkansas Children's has prioritized urgent and emergent procedures and visits at this time. We have postponed all elective surgeries and have limited in-person care to those who have a medical necessity to being seen. However, please remember that patients with an emergent or urgent diagnosis or those who require timely care or operative management can still be seen in our clinics through normal referral methods. We continue to reevaluate visits regularly to determine if any have increased in urgency. Finally, we continue to run a full Emergency Department operation, which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Additionally, we stood up two telemedicine initiatives to help fill gaps in care to the more than 700,000 children across the state. We wish to inform you of each initiative and hope they provide resources to you and the patients and families we jointly serve.

1. COVID-19 Pediatric Hotline and Telehealth Service – The Arkansas Children's team operates the state's COVID-19 Pediatric Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer pediatric questions and concerns related to COVID-19. The hotline also provides COVID-19 screening and a telehealth option for patients and families who may require an added layer of attention or evaluation. The telehealth clinic is open from 9am-9pm daily.
2. Conversion of Outpatient In-Person Visits to Telehealth Visits (when possible) – The Arkansas Children's team is equipped to conduct telephone and telemedicine visits across the vast majority of our services and clinics. We anticipate these capabilities will allow us to effectively transition a significant portion of in-person visits. Please know that telemedicine visits require patients to have a MyChart account and a high-speed internet connection. If you have clinic-specific questions, please reach out directly to the clinic. If you have general questions or need more information to appropriately direct your call, please call (501) 364-4000 or (479) 725-6995.

Keep in mind, these measures are to meet the current emergency situation and we will reevaluate our approach as we move forward to best meet the needs of Arkansans. Please continue to reach out to us or any of your trusted contacts at Arkansas Children's if we can be a resource to you during these challenging times. Now more than ever, we value your partnership and the work we do together.

- COVID-19 PEDIATRIC 24/7 HOTLINE (For patient/family questions),
PLEASE CALL 1-800-743-3616
- TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT OR REFER A PATIENT,
PLEASE CALL: 501-364-4000 (ACH) or 479-725-6995 (ACNW)
- FOR TELEHEALTH GUIDANCE,
PLEASE CALL 501-364-1012 (PROVIDER) or 501-364-2802 (PATIENT)
OR EMAIL ASKTELEHEALTH@ARCHILDRENS.ORG

Sincerely,



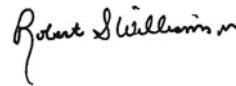
Todd Maxson, MD
Surgeon-in-Chief



Frederick Barr, MD
Pediatrician-in-Chief



Greg Sharp, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Arkansas Children's Hospital



Robert Williams, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Arkansas Children's Northwest

TELEHEALTH FAQs

Who can be seen in a telehealth visit?

Telehealth visits are being offered to patients who already had visits scheduled. We are trying to reschedule as many visits as possible to be telehealth visits.

How are appointments scheduled? What is the family experience? What is the referring physician experience?

Families who already have appointments receive a call and can choose if they are willing and able to complete their visit virtually. If they are, they will receive a message in MyChart with a link to the visit. Referring physicians will get a follow-up in the same manner as always.

What are the hours of availability?

Telehealth visits are available during regular clinic hours. This is not a video on demand service. Families must have a visit scheduled to see a physician unless calling the COVID-19 hotline.

What are the costs? How does billing work?

The guidelines and billing continue to evolve. Physicians are billing with a special modifier added on the billing side.

How is this handled by insurance?

While we don't have all of the details yet, insurance companies are allowing for telehealth visits in ways that were previously not allowed.

Which services are live?

See the attached list for clinics that are currently available for telehealth visits. There are a few clinics listed that aren't live yet but will be by April 18. If a clinic is not listed, telehealth hasn't been requested for it.

What types of primary care issues can be addressed?

Issues that can be addressed through a telehealth visit is made by the physician on a case-by-case basis.

If someone needs support during a telehealth visit, who do they call?

Families call 501-364-2802 for assistance during a telehealth visit. This line is staffed Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 5 PM. Physicians and other staff members can call the main telehealth line at 501-364-1012 for assistance.

What are the options for visits and how are those decisions?

Physicians are determining how patients are scheduled. They have four options for each visit:

- In-person visit
- Telehealth video visit with the patient who is at home
- Telehealth audio only visit
- Postpone appointment

TELEHEALTH FAQs

Can a family or referring physician request a telehealth visit?

Referring physicians can make a referral like normal. The Arkansas Children's provider can specify the telehealth request.

What does a family need to be able to have a telehealth visit?

To take part in a telehealth visits, families need a video-enabled device (phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) and a wireless internet connection.

Does the patient have to have MyChart? How does that work through MyChart?

In order to have a telehealth visit, MyChart is required. Families will receive a message through MyChart with a link to start the visit.

How will the referring physician be communicated with for follow up/notes?

Nothing will change in the way the we communicate with referring physicians.

In general, what is the process from beginning to end?

For a complete process of how a telehealth visit works, see the attached diagram for more information.