



CATALYST HEALTH NETWORK

catalysthealthnetwork.com

8277 Belleview Drive

Plano, TX 75024

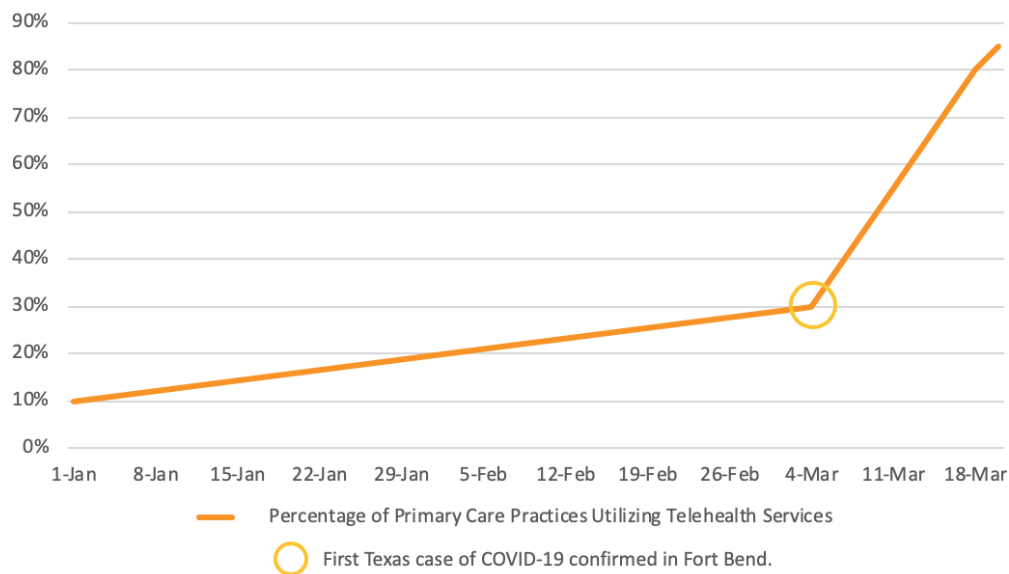
The Impact of Coronavirus on Our Primary Care System

Dr. Christopher Crow, president of Catalyst Health Network

Tom Banning, CEO of Texas Academy of Family Physicians

Catalyst Health Network is comprised of over 800 primary care providers (PCP) serving over 1 million lives in North Texas and beyond. Our PCPs are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. In the last 2 days alone, we have conducted over 500 COVID-19 screening tests between our four drive-through centers across the Metroplex.

PCPs Rush to Adopt Telehealth Services
Provided by Catalyst Health Network



**Data taken from over 800 Primary Care Physicians within Catalyst Health Network*

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, Catalyst Health Network's PCPs have quickly pivoted to a virtual healthcare model. The percentage of practices utilizing telehealth has risen from **10 percent to 85 percent within the last two weeks**. By moving to a virtual platform, we have achieved in five days what would normally take years to integrate into a practice. Providing virtual healthcare is safer for our physicians, our elderly and fragile patients with chronic diseases. Additionally, telehealth ensures patients will stay home to receive the care they need, avoiding the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus.



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By removing certain practice restrictions and payment prohibitions, the federal and state government, through Medicare, Medicaid and Texas' fully insured private market, has greatly improved the efficiency to provide telehealth services. **However**, for self-insured employers, which makes up about two-thirds of our patient population in North Texas, there is no guarantee that telehealth services will be covered. These financially vulnerable practices now face the harsh economic reality of cash flow drying up and jeopardizing the practice's viability. **This will make the current concern of an overrun hospital ED and ICU exponentially worse.**

We cannot afford to lose our primary care workforce. These physicians are serving on the frontlines testing patients for COVID-19, providing continuity for those with chronic diseases and seeing a rising number of mental health patients as individuals struggle with isolation and anxiety about their jobs and the economy. We will compound the felony if these physicians close their practices.

Actions we must take to prevent the fallout of the primary care community, and patients they serve:

- **Require payment parity for telehealth services for ALL patient**
- **Institute immediate prospective payment relief, including ongoing care management to inject needed capital into primary care practices**

The time to seize this opportunity is now. By supporting a relational care model, rather than our broken, transactional fee-for-service model, we can not only help save the front-line primary care doctors during this crisis but also set the foundation for a better way of delivering and paying for care.

At Catalyst Health Network, our purpose is to Help Communities Thrive. In these tenuous times, we must all come together. We want to be a point of light for our communities, our patients and our fellow physicians.