



Hear better. Live better.

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS  
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

---

# Taking Advantage of TeleHear

## Table of Contents

In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.

**Topics covered include:**

Telehealth Trends and Benefits.....	2
Updates on Telehealth Guidelines .....	3
Synchronous Telehealth .....	5

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

Telehealth offers the opportunity to safely meet the needs of your patients who value your professional attention but are not comfortable, able or who you may not need to meet in person. For many of your patients, this appointment solution may be an excellent option to help them immediately hear better.

**While telehealth technology has been available for many years, a culmination of environmental factors has driven acceptance of it among both providers and patients. Some of these key factors include:**

- The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased need to protect the safety of patients and providers
- Relaxed HIPAA privacy and security rules for telehealth
- Advancing technology
- The empowerment of the patient and increasing expectations of convenience, control and cost-savings – especially among Baby Boomers

*The benefits of implementing telehealth are not just specific to the patient. Many benefits to the provider have also become clear.*

- **Improved Satisfaction:**

It has been well documented that telehealth provides improved benefit and satisfaction for hearing aid users, in terms of improved satisfaction received via remote support versus face-to-face care alone.\*

- **Improved Patient Engagement:**

You can't be with patients 24/7. Telehealth enables you to make adjustments directly to a patient's hearing aids whenever and wherever they need help.

- **Increased Efficiency:**

Telehealth appointments remove many logistical inconveniences and inefficiencies of in-office visits, freeing up time to support additional patients.

- **Opportunity for Schedule Optimization:**

Telehealth appointments allow you to take care of fine-tuning and troubleshooting needs, while keeping your in-office appointments available for more revenue-generating opportunities.

- **Increased Access:**

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth allows you to reach patients who may not be comfortable or able to come to your office for an in-person appointment.

- **Improved Hearing Outcomes:**

Research has demonstrated that patients prefer the combination of face-to-face interaction and remote care results over the traditional clinical model, as it allows more personalization to their specific listening needs. In turn, this enhances – rather than threatens – the patient-provider relationship.\*\*

\*Molini-Avejonas DR, Rondon-Melo S, Amato CA, Samelli AG. (2015). A Systematic Review of the Use of Telehealth in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. *J Telemed Telecare*. 21(7):367-76.

Gladden, C, Beck, L, Chandler D (2015). Tele-audiology: Expanding Access to Hearing Care and Enhancing Patient Connectivity. *J. American Academy of Audiology*, 26 (9): 792-799.

\*\*<https://www.hearingreview.com/practice-building/office-services/telehealth/teleaudiology-friend-foe-consumerism-hearing-healthcare-2>

Humes LE, Rogers SE, Quigley TM, Main AK, Kinney DL, Herring C. The effects of service-delivery model and purchase price on hearing aid outcomes in older adults: A factorial randomized double-blind placebo-controlled clinical trial. *Am J Audiol*. 2017 Mar 1;26(1):53-79. doi: 10.1044/2017\_AJA-16-0111.

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

---



## Updates to OCR Telehealth Guidelines

**During the COVID-19 pandemic, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) provided relaxed HIPAA privacy and security rules for telehealth. This ruling does not have an end date, but a new communication will be issued as the situation changes. This is a dynamic situation and should be checked regularly. Key components of the updates include [\[read the full guidance here\]](#):**

- Telehealth should be conducted in private locations with patients at home or in another clinic. If the patient cannot be in a private setting, you should implement reasonable HIPAA safeguards to protect PHI including using a lowered voice, not using a speaker phone or recommending the patient move a reasonable distance from others.
- Providers can use non-public facing video platforms that employ end-to-end communication and allow only the intended parties to participate. Examples include Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Webex, What's App video and Zoom.
- The new guidelines do not cover violations of state licensing laws and ethical standards or the use of public-facing remote communication products such as Tik Tok, Facebook Live or Slack.

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Telehealth Options

**Telehealth includes services provided through audio, mobile or video communication technology that allows providers to connect with multiple types of patients remotely.**

- **Patient types:**

- Patients in a trial period
- Patients in need of fine-tuning
- Patients in need of troubleshooting help
- Patients in need of counseling
- Patients who could benefit from an accessory or assistive device
- Patients in need of hearing aids that have a valid audiogram, as permitted by state regulations

**Telehealth is most commonly executed in a synchronous format.**



# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Telehealth Options *(continued)*

**Synchronous** - Real-time, audio-video communication that connects providers and patients in different locations.

- **Synchronous Telehealth** can be executed in a variety of ways and with multiple types of patients depending on your specific set-up and needs. Execute synchronous telehealth using text messaging, phone calls and video technology (non-public facing platform).
- “In-Office” telehealth is also a consideration if your patient does not have accessible technology for a telehealth appointment. Consider creating a room in your office where they can join a video call with you from a separate room. You will be able to better communicate with them without the need for a mask during the conversation and they can still feel comfortable by completing an appointment that is not fully in-person.
- **TeleHear**<sup>®</sup> allows you to make remote programming adjustments using a two-way audiovisual link between you and your patient. Join the live session at the designated appointment time to interact with your patient via video chat. Send remote programming adjustments directly to the patient’s hearing aids during the session so that they can experience the changes.

Now that TeleHear is enabled for all patients across all tiers of Starkey’s Evolv AI, Livio Edge AI, Livio AI and Livio hearing aids, remote programming is a service you can offer to patients when they may not be comfortable coming into the office, can be helped through fine-tuning, and allow for your office to better and safely treat the patients who need an in-person appointment.

Learn more about TeleHear [HERE](#).

*Video connections can go a long ways. While phone visits are great, video connections add a personal touch and value to remote care visits that make them feel more like an in-office visit.*



*To learn more about how to implement telehealth into your office, download our **Integrate Telehealth into Your Office Guide** [HERE](#)*