



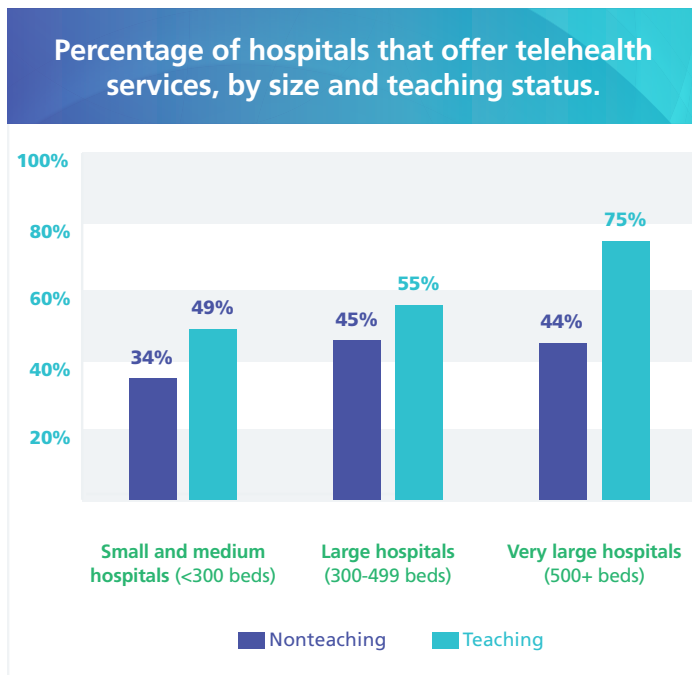
# Teaching Hospitals and Telehealth

The COVID-19 crisis has created a sudden demand for telehealth in the United States. According to recent national data, teaching hospitals were more likely than other hospitals to offer telehealth services — also known as telemedicine, digital health, virtual care, and connected care — before the pandemic’s onset, allowing them to expand access to care more conveniently and effectively.

According to an AAMC analysis of 2017 data from the American Hospital Association Annual Survey Database, the latest data available, teaching hospitals were more likely than nonteaching hospitals to offer many types of telehealth services before the COVID-19 crisis.<sup>1</sup>

- Among teaching hospitals with 500 or more beds, 75% offered at least one telehealth service, while only 44% of nonteaching hospitals with 500 or more beds offered telehealth services.
- Of teaching hospitals with fewer than 300 beds, 49% had begun offering at least one telehealth service, compared with 34% of nonteaching hospitals of the same size.

Analyses from the same data show that compared with nonteaching hospitals, teaching hospitals had higher odds of providing telehealth visits, remote patient monitoring after discharge, remote patient monitoring for chronic care management, telepsychiatry care, and telestroke care, even after accounting for hospital size, region, and setting.<sup>2</sup>



These findings demonstrate that teaching hospitals played a leading role in adopting and delivering new technologies that meet patients’ needs. These technologies support timely and efficient access to care, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Maintaining and increasing investment in teaching hospitals, including reimbursement for telehealth services and research to assess the impact of telehealth on patient outcomes, is critical to ensuring all patients can benefit from these innovations.

- Teaching hospitals absorb additional costs associated with providing these services, which affects the funding available to invest in their multipart mission.
- In addition to providing care to patients, teaching hospitals train the next generation of physicians and health care workers and participate in medical research to bring new treatments and cures to patients as quickly and safely as possible.
- Teaching hospitals are the only places where patient care, medical education, and research come together. The intersection of these missions creates an environment that not only advances health care broadly but also benefits individual patients.

Telehealth services help physicians and patients connect in effective and efficient ways. Telehealth has proven to be essential during times of crisis and will continue to allow for timely access to care in the future.

**Notes**

1. AAMC analysis of the American Hospital Association’s Annual Survey Database (FY 2017).
2. AAMC Data Snapshot: Teaching hospitals lead in telehealth adoption. December 2019. <https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2019-12/hca-data-snapshot-teaching-hospitals-lead-in-telehealth-adoption-12-10-19.pdf>.