# TELEMEDICINE

ADJUNCTIVE SERVICE TO HELP PATIENTS AND THE PRACTICE

# GOALS - UTILIZE TELEMEDICINE TO:

- Provide service to patients while reducing risk of viral transmission among patients and staff

- Determine necessity of in-person examination

- Establish a revenue stream while clinic volume remains subnormal

# FOR WHOM?

- Offered by call center staff when patient:
    - expresses reluctance to make in-person visit
    - has fever, recent viral exposure, travel that would preclude in-person visit
- Consider adding to website and after-hours phone message

# REGULATORY

- As part of the COVID-19 Emergency Declarations:
  - FaceTime, zoom Skype are acceptable for now since HHS OCR will not penalize physicians for HIPAA non-compliance during emergency. That would likely change when Emergency declaration ends.
  - Patient's home is an acceptable location (use proper coding modifier)
  - Permissible to offer to New and established patients
- Inform patient that platform is not HIPAA-compliant
- Controlled substance prescribing have additional restrictions; see DEA if needed.
- Standards of care still apply
  - Medical
  - Documentation

# WORKFLOW – CALL CENTER

- Create appointment/encounter in PM system with date and time

    - Note appointment type as Telemedicine

    - Book during normal physician template times

- Inform patient:

    - Encounter is billable and most payers are covering. COPAYMENTS do apply

    - Verbal consent will be needed at the beginning of the encounter (consider publishing Form on website per TMA)

    - Real-time audio+video is possible. FaceTime for iOS users or Skype for Microsoft accounts

        - Suggest that patient may want to enlist technical help from family or friends prior to initiation of encounter

        - Patient may need to download an app or create an account prior to encounter

# WORKFLOW – CALL CENTER (CONTINUED)

- Set expectations for course of call

  - Explain the benefit of reducing in-person exposures

  - A technician will initiate the call, ensure functionality, and take a brief history, then turn visit over to physician

- Provide links to visual acuity chart or app

# HOME ACUITY TEST

- https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/home-eye-test-children-adults
- https://www.aao.org/Assets/e2ee3094-abfa-4b4b-b4e2-f56ac4c5c932/637205688825830000/snellen-chart-for-adults-10-feet-1-pdf?inline=1
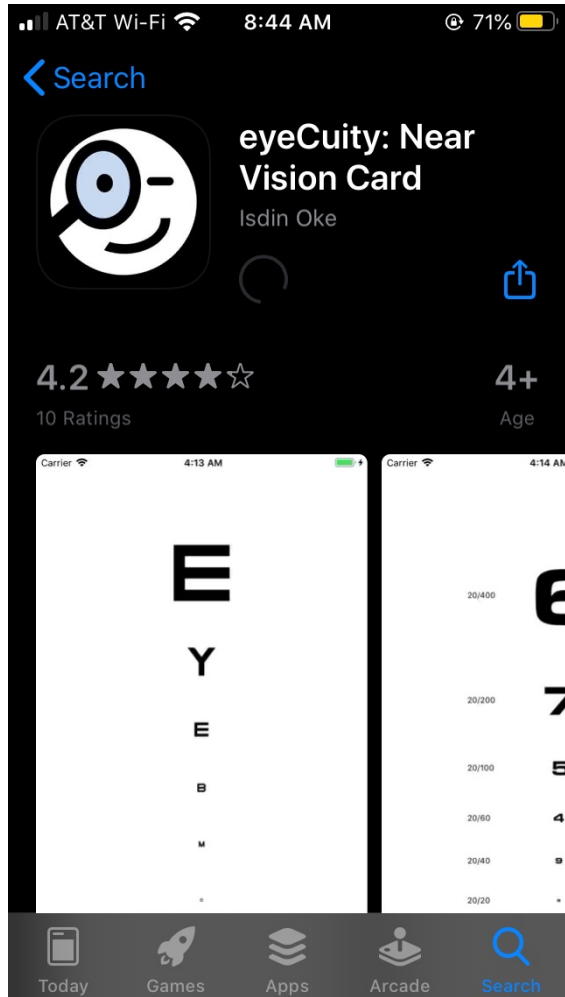
Snellen chart for adults

K H O R  20/100

O Z N H V C  20/70

R K S C Z H V D  20/50

H O C Z R  K D S V N  20/30

S D K H   O R C V  20/20

# SMARTPHONE APPS

# WORKFLOW – TECHNICIAN

Initiate contact with patient at appointment time if physician desires

Ensure good image quality/lighting of patient

Take brief history, open usual templates in EMR and document CC/HPI

Record visual acuity; may need to guide patient through self-test during call

# WORKFLOW – PHYSICIAN

- Use your platform of choice on your personal device

- Take over visit from technician

- Start timer/note start time

- Obtain verbal consent to perform telemedicine and document (create My Phrase)

  - Platform may not be 100% secure

  - Exam details are limited compared to office exam; diagnostic ability also limited

# WORKFLOW – PHYSICIAN (CONTINUED)

- Use microphone and look at your device camera as much as possible

- Will need good illumination of the patient's eyes

- Document as much as possible: External exam, EOM, pupils, lids, conj/cornea, AC, iris

- Conclude encounter, document as normal, and Submit appropriate CPT; some CPTs may depend on actual time spent live with patient, so record start time, finish time, and duration.

- Include location of physician and patient location (My Phrase)

- If done after-hours, include screenshot of patient's insurance card and email to Allison Camacho.

# REFERENCES

- TMA: https://www.texmed.org/Telemedicine/

- AAO: https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/home-eye-test-children-adults

- https://www.aao.org/Assets/e2ee3094-abfa-4b4b-b4e2-f56ac4c5c932/637205688825830000/snellen-chart-for-adults-10-feet-1-pdf?inline=1

- https://www.aao.org/practice-management/article/teleophthalmology-how-to-get-started

- ASCRS: https://ascrs.org/clinical-education/webinars/2020-webinar-updated-implementing-tele-ophthalmology-during-the-covid-19-pandemic

- HHS: https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/

- CMS: https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-telemedicine-health-care-provider-fact-sheet