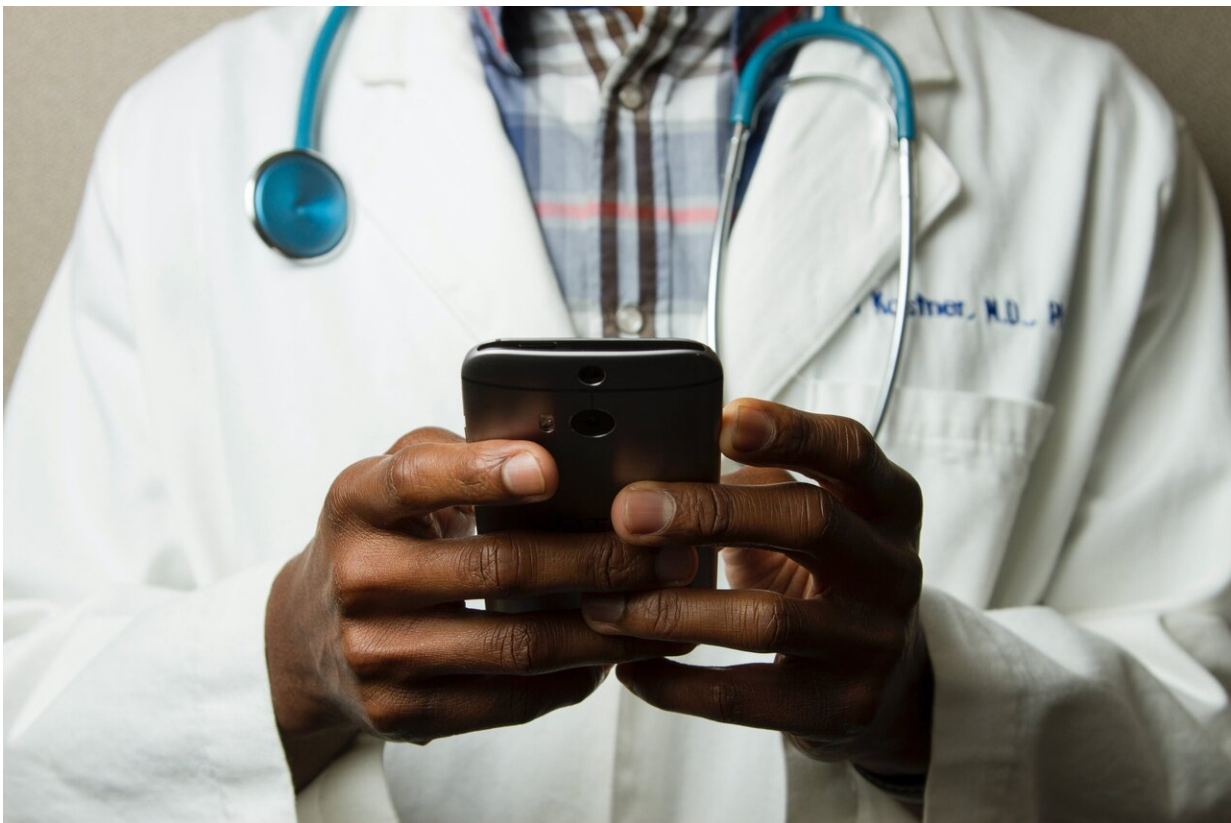


Social factors did not impact families' acceptance of telehealth in early pandemic

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Social, economic, and demographic factors that can influence health did not affect families' acceptance of telehealth for their children's cardiac care during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study presented at

the Pediatric Academic Society 2021 Virtual Meeting. The study, by research team members at the Nemours Children's Health System, suggests that telehealth is a feasible tool for families regardless of household income, language, or insurance type.

"When we saw that the use of telehealth would be necessary for maintaining children's cardiac care during COVID, we worried that some of our families would face barriers in using it," said lead author Carissa M. Baker-Smith, MD, MPH, director of Preventive Cardiology at Nemours. "We saw that these factors were not a barrier in families' choice to use telehealth and in fact may have been a welcome option."

A total of 849 [pediatric patients](#) were scheduled for cardiac visits at Nemours Cardiac Center, Wilmington, Del., between March 30 and May 8, 2020. When all non-urgent care was paused, families were given the option of using telehealth for their visit, or rescheduling the visit until a future date. The study team found that 52 percent agreed to telehealth visits, while 48 percent chose to reschedule. Patients with a primary diagnosis of abnormal heart rhythm, acquired [heart disease](#), [chest pain](#), dysautonomia/dizziness, and dyslipidemia, as well as families of children of Hispanic ethnicity were more likely to accept telehealth appointments. Families of older children, children scheduled for follow-up rather than new visits, and families who lived in Delaware, the same state as the care facility, were less likely to accept telehealth care.

Based on the high acceptance levels, the Cardiac Center has continued to offer [telehealth](#) appointments for certain appointment types even as in-person care has largely resumed.

Provided by Nemours Children's Health System

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