



You may have heard words like telemedicine, telehealth, digital medicine, e-health, or m-health ("for mobile health"), or digital medicine in the media, news, or from friends and family. Telemedicine, by definition, is the use of telecommunication and information technologies (IT) to provide clinical health care services.

## FACT

At [HealthX](#), we leverage technology to improve patient outcomes by increasing access to non-emergency primary healthcare and medical information, including through telemedicine.

[This is not something new at all](#), however, it has become more accessible and has played a key role during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing non-urgent but vital care to be provided in the safety and comfort of our homes. And so, today we are here to talk about the five most common myths and misconceptions about telehealth:

### Myth 1:

A physical exam is needed to diagnose and treat all conditions

#### Fact 1:

Global Telemedicine Industry's research suggests about 70% of general practice consultations can be safely and fully carried via telemedicine, online or by phone or video. A range of conditions like colds, flu and allergies can be diagnosed and treated virtually with a thorough medical history, while conditions like skin issues can be examined virtually with the aid of videos, electronic devices, [apps](#) or with the help of medical assistants (like nurses) reaching the doctor virtually. Telemedicine also plays a very big role in the follow-up management of chronic illnesses like Diabetes and Hypertension (high blood pressure) and adherence to treatment for these patients, where again, a physical examination is not usually required every time.

### Myth 2:

Telemedicine is an expensive service

#### Fact 2:

[Telemedicine can often be less expensive and more cost-effective for everyone involved.](#)

Patients save on healthcare consultation costs, unnecessary tests, lost time from work, childcare costs, and the inconvenience of having to transport themselves or family to the hospital, most especially if one has a chronic condition and requires regular reviews by a doctor. All one needs to pay is for the service one receives. Doctors and clinics save on overhead expenses like having to room patients, take vitals and provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff. So, telemedicine can be a win-win for all!

### Myth 3:

My health information is not secure

**Fact 3:** Telemedicine platforms are required to adhere to strict guidelines. You may be concerned that your highly confidential information will not be well protected, and this is understandable. However, be reassured! Telemedicine platforms are required to adhere to strict guidelines that govern data protection and confidentiality (these vary in different countries and jurisdictions), similar to confidentiality and data protection guidelines that are in place at any regular doctor's office. Secure telemedicine call platforms are also used for consultations, so your actual consultation should feel confidential, safe, and private. HealthX has aligned its data protection policies and practices to governance from:

- [The Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act](#)
- [Kenya National eHealth Policy 2016-2030](#)
- [Kenya Standards and Guidelines for mHealth Systems](#)
- [Kenya Data Protection Act 2019](#)
- [HIPAA](#) Guidelines

These all ensure that your private health information is always of paramount importance.

### Myth 4:

Doctors seeing patients virtually cannot prescribe medications

#### Fact 4:

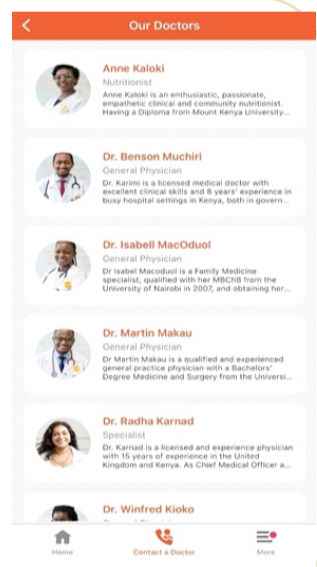
Doctors can prescribe a wide range of drugs to address primary health care concerns including short-term prescriptions for maintenance medicines or refills for chronic illnesses. This saves patients time and money from commuting to consultations and pharmacies, waiting to see doctors, and spending on consultation fees. The only exception to prescribing is controlled substances including, Xanax and opiates among others.

### Myth 5:

It will not be possible to choose a doctor

#### Fact 5:

Most Telehealth platforms have their doctor's profiles with detailed information about their experience, expertise and more, so that patients can have as much control as possible when it comes to their health and confidential information. While some act as a platform where doctors operating independently can also avail telemedicine services, at HealthX Africa, all our doctors work exclusively for HealthX full-time, and patients are able to [choose from our list of excellent, committed, board-certified providers](#) to select the one best suited to them for their needs.



## What do I do with this information?

We hope that debunking the myths of telemedicine and knowing the facts has made it less amorphous and more accessible to you. Naturally, the sudden reliance on telehealth during the pandemic was disorienting. Healthcare providers and patients alike are still adjusting to the shift to remote health care, and rightfully so. The concept and technology of telemedicine has been peer reviewed by some of the brightest minds in healthcare and science and the groundwork that led to our current ability to speak to our doctors on a mobile phone is extensive.

At HealthX, we assure you that your needs and the safety of your medical data are our priority! We believe you should have the power to make the best health and wellness decisions for yourself and your family, not driven by cost or fear, but by what you need. Be it preventive, promotive, curative, or rehabilitative primary health care, we strive to be your constant and trusted partner on your health and wellness journey, and to support you in achieving your dreams and aspirations for yourself and your family. If you have any questions or need any more information about telemedicine or any health care issues, contact us anytime on our toll-free number **0800 720 795**.

#### Reference List

1. <https://www.sigmundsoftware.com/blog/history-of-telehealth/>
2. <https://www.healthxafrica.com/>
3. <http://erepo.usiu.ac.ke/handle/11732/4152?jsessionid=7FE8D0885F4FF93B50512ECF20C797420>
4. <https://health.ecg.int/file-download/download/public/86>
5. <https://www.health.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Revised-Guidelines-For-Mhealth-Systems-May-Version.pdf>
6. [TheDataProtectionAct\\_No24of2019.pdf](TheDataProtectionAct_No24of2019.pdf) (kenyalaw.org)
7. Global Telemedicine Industry: Global Telemedicine Market to Reach \$75.2 Billion by 2027. Amid the COVID-19 crisis, the global market for Telemedicine estimated at US\$31.4 Billion in the year 2020, is projected to reach a revised size of US\$75.2020, New York.