

Who's Missing & Why: A Comparative Analysis of No-Show Rates Among Telehealth and Non-Telehealth Clients

An In-Depth Review of Attendance Patterns by Age, Gender, Insurance, Mental Health Diagnoses, Substance Use, and Veteran Status

This report presents a comparative analysis of patient no-show rates between two cohorts: individuals with five or more telehealth visits and those with no telehealth visits. Understanding how telehealth utilization impacts patient engagement is critical in optimizing care delivery, reducing appointment gaps, and informing strategic investments in virtual services. By examining demographic, insurance, behavioral health, and veteran status subcategories, this analysis aims to uncover patterns and disparities in appointment adherence. The findings offer valuable insights for healthcare providers, administrators, and policymakers seeking to balance accessibility with accountability in an evolving care landscape.

Executive Summary

The analysis reveals that **telehealth usage is associated with a higher overall no-show rate (14.57%)** compared to those who had **no telehealth visits (10.38%)**. Subgroup analysis across demographics, insurance status, behavioral health diagnoses, and substance use disorders indicates that **telehealth patients exhibit greater variability in attendance**, with particularly elevated no-show rates among males and those with substance use disorders.

Key highlights:

- **Males with telehealth** have an **81% higher no-show rate** than males without telehealth.
- **Females without telehealth** show slightly higher no-show rates than their telehealth counterparts.
- **Medicaid and Medicare patients with telehealth** miss more appointments than those without.
- **Telehealth patients with substance use disorders** show **consistently higher no-show rates** across all substance categories.

Detailed Point-by-Point Comparison

1. Overall No-Show Rate

Group	Total Patients	No-Show Rate
5+ Telehealth Visits	563	14.57%
0 Telehealth Visits	1,458	10.38%

2. Age Group

Age Group	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
18 and older	16.89%	11.38%
Less than 18	12.26%	9.39%

Observation: No-show rates are consistently higher in telehealth users across both age categories.

3. Gender

Gender	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
Female	13.74%	14.41%
Male	18.44%	10.18%
Unknown	—	5.35%

Observation:

- Males with telehealth appointments had **the highest gender-specific no-show rate (18.44%)**.
- Females without telehealth had a **slightly higher no-show rate** than those using telehealth.

4. Medicaid/Care Status

Insurance Type	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
Medicaid	16.07%	9.12%
Medicare	17.09%	7.60%
Other Insurance	17.03%	15.94%

Observation: Medicaid and Medicare patients who used telehealth missed appointments more often than those who didn't. Patients with "Other Insurance" show a smaller difference.

5. Mental Health Disorders

Disorder Category	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
Behavioral/emotional (child/adolescent)	13.54%	8.90%
Personality & behavioral (adult)	23.07%	1.92%
Psychological development	6.25%	24.83%
Mood (affective)	13.57%	10.05%
Neurotic/stress/somatoform	13.69%	10.41%
Schizophrenia spectrum	9.27%	7.31%

Observation:

- Across nearly all mental health categories, **telehealth users have higher no-show rates**, with **Personality Disorders in adults showing a dramatic increase (23.07% vs. 1.92%)**.
- Psychological development disorders are the only category where the non-telehealth group had a significantly higher no-show rate.

6. Substance Use Disorders

Substance	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
Alcohol	18.57%	9.88%
Cannabinoids	21.19%	16.41%
Opioids/benzos/depressants	17.66%	11.20%
Stimulants	18.11%	13.77%
Hallucinogens/Inhalants	N/A	6.43% / 0.00%
Unspecified	26.98%	38.46%

Observation:

- **Every substance category shows higher no-show rates among telehealth users**, with alcohol and stimulant-related disorders showing nearly **double the rate** in telehealth.

7. Veteran Status

Status	Telehealth No-Show	No Telehealth No-Show
Veteran	10.78%	14.17%
Not Veteran	16.03%	11.19%
N/A	17.99%	11.25%

Observation:

- Veterans using telehealth have **lower no-show rates** than those not using it.
- For non-veterans, telehealth is associated with a **significantly higher no-show rate**.

Final Notes

1. **Telehealth may reduce access barriers** for certain groups (e.g., veterans, females), but it appears to **increase missed appointments**, especially for:
 - Males
 - Medicaid/Medicare recipients
 - Individuals with substance use disorders
2. **Policy Implication:** While telehealth expands access, it may require **additional engagement strategies** to reduce no-shows—like reminders, incentives, or integrated case management for high-risk populations.
3. **Limitations:** Different patient populations may self-select into telehealth vs. in-person care. For instance, patients using telehealth may have more complex social or logistical challenges (e.g., unreliable internet, chaotic home environments) that also contribute to no-shows. In addition, clinicians may attempt to schedule telehealth appointments with clients that already have high no-show rates.

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