

## VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS WORKFLOW AND PROCESSES- AMBULATORY

**Purpose:** The purpose of this initiative is to create a process by which we can continue to provide care to our current patients and to see new patients while minimizing the risk of exposure of COVID-19 pandemic.

\*If as a Chair, you or your providers feel that your department would benefit from use of virtual visits strategy that has been created, the telehealth taskforce will gladly provide specific consultation on design and implementation of current options.

Based on initial consult, a plan of action will be determined on how to prepare practice for a go-live with established patients, and then spread to new patients. A site designee will be identified to partner with the taskforce to confirm from patient panel who are viable candidates.

### What is a Virtual Visit?

A virtual appointment is a physician/provider appointment, but instead of being in person, the visit is done through video conferencing. At USA Health, Zoom meetings is utilized. Preferred visit is audio visual and not just telephone consult.

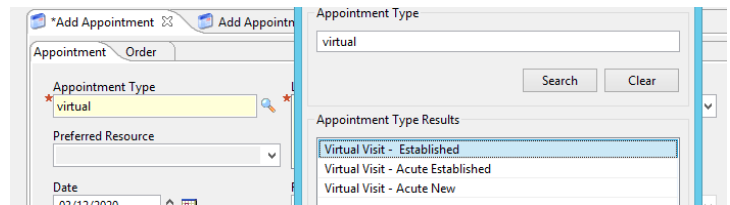
### Who is a candidate for Virtual Visits?

- 1) New or current **routine (well) visits**.
- 2) New or current **problematic visits** (non- Covid-19 symptoms).
- 3) New or current **problematic visits** (Covid-19 symptoms such as cough, fever, difficulty breathing).

**Communication and Confirmation:** all patients must have an email address and computer or phone with a camera, which will be verified by telehealth designee.

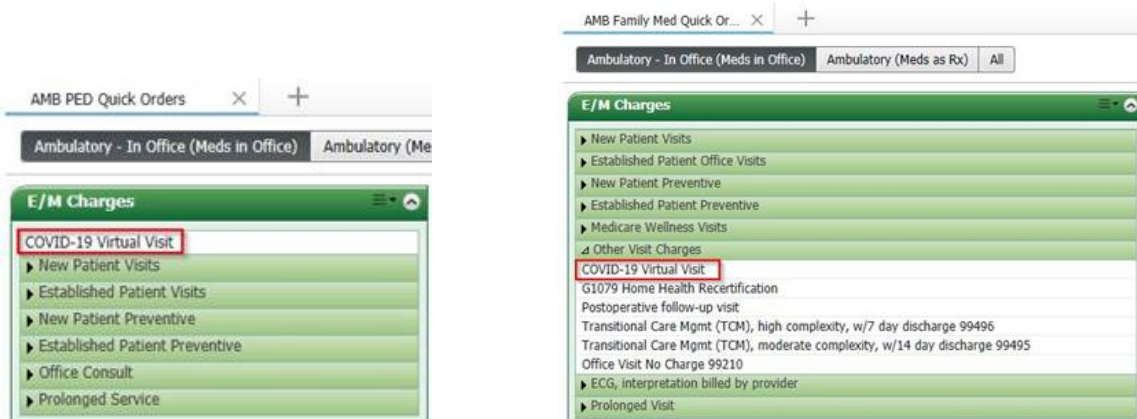
### Scheduling the Appointment:

Appointments will be scheduled in Revenue Cycle just like any other appointment type. Virtual appointments will utilize the appointment types starting with "Virtual". Select the needed appointment type and then the location where the appointment will be held. For the complete process of scheduling an appointment, please see the "Scheduling Appointments" document.



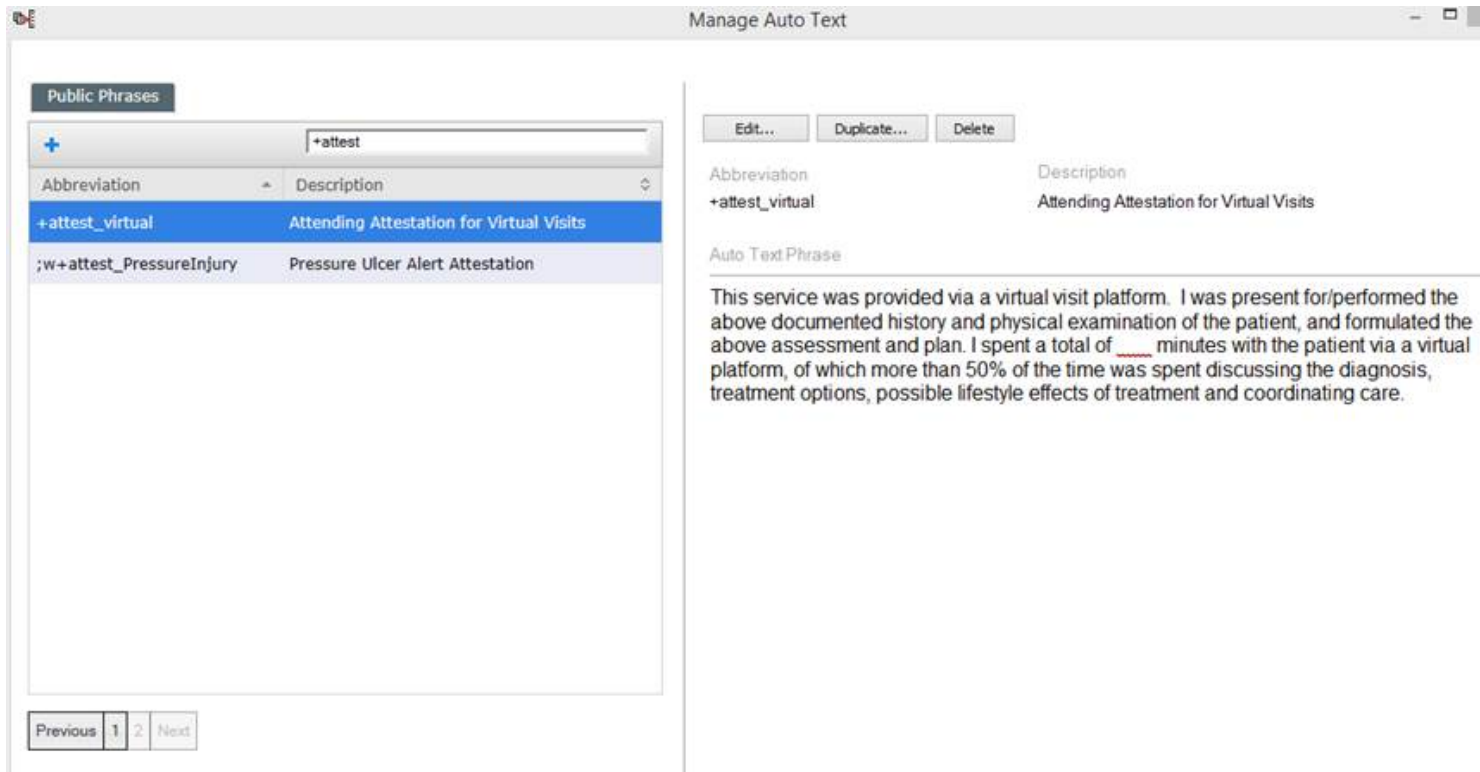
### Appointment Day:

- 1) Start meeting in Zoom meetings from link for the appointment
- 2) When patient joins ask verbally for consent for treatment. (See USA Health Virtual Visit General Consent)
- 3) Patient will need to be checked-in through Revenue Cycle.
- 4) MA will conduct virtual intake process. \*Varies by practice.
- 5) Patient handoff to provider.
- 6) Virtual examination. \*Varies by practice.
  - a. Minimum 15 minutes, based on appointment type.
- 7) Select the order- "**Covid-19 Virtual Visit**"



- 8) Select E/M Code drops to **COVID19**
- 9) USA Health administration is working to add attestation statements. See below for examples:
  - "This service was provided via a secure virtual visit platform and I was present for/performed the above documented history and physical examination of the patient and formulated the above assessment and plan."
  - Time statement (i.e, I spent a total of \_ minutes face-to-face with the patient VIA A VIRTUAL PLATFORM, of which more than 50% of the time was spent discussing the diagnosis, treatment options, possible lifestyle effects of treatment and coordinating care)

*Justification for time statement is related to performing a virtual visit and not being able to perform an extensive physical exam, we would be using the time method of billing to justify the charges.*



- 10) A correspondence has been included in Cerner to send to USA referring providers in "communication".

*Dear provider,*

*You are receiving this letter because the University of South Alabama health system feels that you are an integral part of our ability to deliver sound healthcare to the citizens of our region.*

*As the region's tertiary healthcare center, the USA Health is taking preemptive steps to ensure that we can not only care for potential COVID-19 patients, but that we also minimize risk of coronavirus transmission to all non-infected patients.*

*To this end, we are making the following proactive changes to our ambulatory clinics:*

1. *We are prospectively triaging all clinic visits in an attempt to defer all health maintenance, oncology surveillance, and screening visits at all of our ambulatory clinics. We hope that this measure will minimize exposure.*
2. *For patients that cannot be safely deferred, we have partnered with Zoom Video, a HIPAA-compliant virtual clinic visit platform, to provide an avenue of tele-medicine for patients that are a candidate for a virtual visit. This will allow our providers to continue to provide healthcare to all patients. Obviously, we understand the limitations in providing a virtual visit but we feel that this patient care tool is essential during this pandemic.*
3. *We will continue to conduct traditional clinic visits for patients that cannot be deferred and cannot be optimally evaluated in a virtual visit. Currently, we are using the coronavirus screening protocols developed by the CDC on all patients and family members that enter our facilities.*

*As a referring provider to our health system, we ask that you not only understand the need for these changes to our delivery of care to your patients, but that you have tolerance with our health system as we care for your patients.*

*We have been forced into an unprecedented, unique era of healthcare in our country, and as care providers, we must work together for the health and well-being of the citizens of our region.*