

Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker Trending Reports

A User's Guide

A FAIR Health Brief, October 15, 2024



This brief is a user's guide to the <u>Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker Trending Reports</u>, a set of infographics that show national and regional six-month trends in telehealth.

Launched in May 2020 as a free service, the Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker uses FAIR Health data to track how telehealth is evolving from month to month. An interactive map of the four US census regions (Midwest, Northeast, South, West) allows the user to view an infographic on telehealth in a specific month in the nation as a whole or in individual regions. Each year, the Telehealth Tracker presents varied views into telehealth utilization. For 2024, each infographic shows month-to-month changes in volume of telehealth claim lines; that month's top five diagnostic categories, mental health diagnoses and specialties; age distribution; and the Place of Service Cost Corner, which compares median allowed amounts for a specific procedure provided via telehealth to the same procedure provided in an office.

The Telehealth Tracker has attracted widespread interest from media outlets, researchers, government officials, health plans, providers and other key healthcare stakeholders. To add another dimension to the Telehealth Tracker, and broaden its lens, FAIR Health created the Telehealth Tracker Trending Reports, which offer a window into changes over longer periods than one month. These first trending reports show national and regional trends in telehealth utilization—as measured by telehealth's percentage of medical claim lines 1—and the top five telehealth diagnostic categories across each month from January to June 2024. The data represent the commercially insured population, excluding Medicare Fee-for-Service, Medicare Advantage and Medicaid.

What follows is a guide to the findings presented in the first edition of the Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker Trending Reports.

¹ A claim line is an individual service or procedure listed on an insurance claim.



٠

Utilization

Telehealth utilization—measured as the percentage of medical claim lines attributable to telehealth—increased from January to June 2024 nationally and in all regions except the Northeast, where it decreased.

Nationally, telehealth utilization rose from 4.78 percent in January to 4.89 percent in June, an increase of 2.30 percent (figure 1).

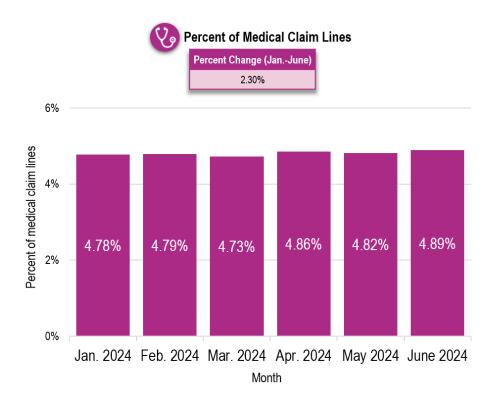


Figure 1. Telehealth's percentage of medical claim lines, national, January-June 2024



The West was the region with the largest increase in telehealth utilization (4.52 percent), followed by the South (2.86 percent) and the Midwest (1.93 percent). In the Northeast, telehealth utilization fell from 5.95 percent in January to 5.73 percent in June, a decrease of 3.72 percent (figure 2).

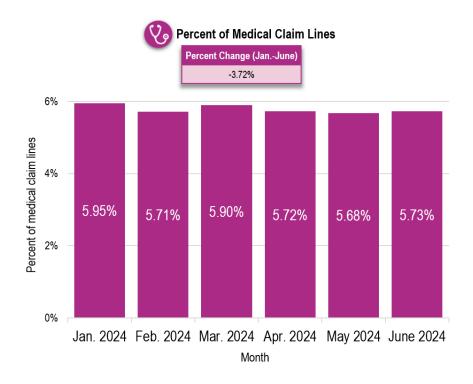


Figure 2. Telehealth's percentage of medical claim lines, Northeast, January-June 2024



Diagnostic Categories

From January to June 2024, mental health conditions ranked as the number one telehealth diagnostic category nationally and in all regions and increased as a percentage of claim lines nationally and in all regions over that time. Nationally, mental health conditions rose from 66.29 percent of telehealth claim lines in January to 68.05 percent in June, an increase of 2.65 percent (figure 3).



Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	June 2024
Mental Health Conditions (66.29%)	Mental Health Conditions (67.20%)	Mental Health Conditions (67.91%)	Mental Health Conditions (68.93%)	Mental Health Conditions (68.61%)	Mental Health Conditions (68.05%)
Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (3.12%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (2.79%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (2.33%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.90%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.74%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.57%)
Encounter for Examination (1.98%)	Encounter for Examination (1.99%)	Encounter for Examination (1.92%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.54%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.53%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.55%)
Developmental Disorders (1.43%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.44%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.51%)	Developmental Disorders (1.49%)	Developmental Disorders (1.48%)	Developmental Disorders (1.44%)
Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.40%)	Developmental Disorders (1.43%)	Developmental Disorders (1.46%)	Encounter for Examination (1.47%)	Encounter for Examination (1.47%)	Encounter for Examination (1.41%)

Figure 3. Top five telehealth diagnostic categories, national, January-June 2024

Nationally, the top five diagnostic categories remained the same throughout the six-month period—mental health conditions, acute respiratory diseases and infections, encounter for examination, developmental disorders, and endocrine and metabolic disorders—but their order changed. Endocrine and metabolic disorders rose throughout the period, from fifth position in January to fourth in February and March, then to third in April and May, and finally to second in June.



The top five diagnostic categories in each of the four regions shared some of the categories in the national top five, but also included other categories. In the Midwest, substance use disorders ranked fourth from January to March, third in April and second in May before falling to fourth position again in June (figure 4). In addition, overweight and obesity appeared in fifth position in June.



Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
Mental Health	Mental Health				
Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions
(72.30%)	(72.55%)	(72.30%)	(72.61%)	(72.59%)	(72.56%)
Encounter for Examination (2.48%)	Encounter for	Encounter for	Encounter for	Substance Use	Encounter for
	Examination	Examination	Examination	Disorders	Examination
	(2.80%)	(2.52%)	(2.44%)	(1.72%)	(1.89%)
Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (2.02%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.76%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.79%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.65%)	Encounter for Examination (1.70%)	Developmental Disorders (1.58%)
Substance Use	Substance Use	Substance Use	Developmental	Developmental	Substance Use
Disorders	Disorders	Disorders	Disorders	Disorders	Disorders
(1.54%)	(1.47%)	(1.60%)	(1.51%)	(1.51%)	(1.56%)
Developmental Disorders (1.27%)	Developmental Disorders (1.44%)	Developmental Disorders (1.49%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.40%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.50%)	Overweight and Obesity (1.35%)

Figure 4. Top five telehealth diagnostic categories, Midwest, January-June 2024

The top five diagnostic categories in the Northeast included COVID-19 and overweight and obesity in, respectively, fourth and fifth position in January (figure 5). After that, COVID-19 fell out of the list and substance use disorders joined in fifth position, with overweight and obesity moving to fourth. Overweight and obesity and substance use disorders rose in the rankings in the Northeast from February to June, with overweight and obesity ending in second position in June and substance use disorders in fourth.



Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
Mental Health	Mental Health				
Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions
(75.25%)	(75.63%)	(76.88%)	(77.09%)	(77.21%)	(76.01%)
Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.83%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.67%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.37%)	Developmental Disorders (1.39%)	Overweight and Obesity (1.41%)	Overweight and Obesity (1.42%)
Developmental	Developmental	Developmental	Overweight and	Developmental	Developmental
Disorders	Disorders	Disorders	Obesity	Disorders	Disorders
(1.39%)	(1.37%)	(1.36%)	(1.33%)	(1.38%)	(1.29%)
COVID-19 (1.30%)	Overweight and Obesity (1.27%)	Overweight and Obesity (1.30%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.16%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.19%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.18%)
Overweight and Obesity (1.18%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.17%)	Substance Use Disorders (1.15%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.13%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.05%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.09%)

Figure 5. Top five telehealth diagnostic categories, Northeast, January-June 2024

The South was notable as the only region to have hypertension in its top five diagnostic categories in all six months (figure 6). Hypertension ranked in fourth position in January and May and in fifth position in the other months of the period. Acute respiratory diseases and infections ranked in second or third position in the South in all six months; in every other region, this diagnostic category fell out of the top five positions by May or June.



Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	June 2024
Mental Health Conditions (56.03%)	Mental Health Conditions (57.09%)	Mental Health Conditions (58.83%)	Mental Health Conditions (60.22%)	Mental Health Conditions (60.10%)	Mental Health Conditions (59.13%)
Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (5.59%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (5.28%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (3.97%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (3.42%)	Encounter for Examination (3.12%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (2.81%)
Encounter for Examination (4.06%)	Encounter for Examination (3.74%)	Encounter for Examination (3.84%)	Encounter for Examination (2.95%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (2.94%)	Encounter for Examination (2.67%)
Hypertension (2.12%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (2.09%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (2.19%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (2.33%)	Hypertension (2.33%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (2.36%)
Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.91%)	Hypertension (1.90%)	Hypertension (2.18%)	Hypertension (2.04%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (2.25%)	Hypertension (2.17%)

Figure 6. Top five telehealth diagnostic categories, South, January-June 2024

In the West, joint/soft tissue diseases and issues ranked in second position in the top five diagnostic categories throughout the period (figure 7). Diabetes mellitus appeared in fifth position in May and remained there in June. Acute respiratory diseases and infections ranked in third position in January but fell after that, and fell out of the top five diagnostic categories in the West in May.



Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental Health	Mental Health
Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions
(64.34%)	(64.62%)	(64.60%)	(65.49%)	(65.41%)	(64.85%)
Joint/Soft Tissue	Joint/Soft Tissue	Joint/Soft Tissue	Joint/Soft Tissue	Joint/Soft Tissue	Joint/Soft Tissue
Diseases and	Diseases and	Diseases and	Diseases and	Diseases and	Diseases and
Issues	Issues	Issues	Issues	Issues	Issues
(2.00%)	(2.12%)	(2.23%)	(2.19%)	(2.22%)	(2.23%)
Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.98%)	Encounter for	Developmental	Developmental	Developmental	Developmental
	Examination	Disorders	Disorders	Disorders	Disorders
	(2.07%)	(1.79%)	(1.86%)	(1.84%)	(1.82%)
Developmental Disorders (1.80%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.77%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.69%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.63%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.58%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.64%)
Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.52%)	Developmental Disorders (1.73%)	Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (1.56%)	Acute Respiratory Diseases and Infections (1.36%)	Diabetes Mellitus (1.38%)	Diabetes Mellitus (1.41%)

Figure 7. Top five telehealth diagnostic categories, West, January-June 2024

Conclusion

Taken together, the results of the first edition of the Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker Trending Reports shed light on telehealth utilization and diagnostic categories in the six months from January to June 2024. We hope that the trending reports will be useful to all healthcare stakeholders, including policy makers, payors, providers, patients and researchers.

Click here for the Monthly Telehealth Regional Tracker Trending Reports.



About FAIR Health

FAIR Health is a national, independent nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing transparency to healthcare costs and health insurance information through data products, consumer resources and health systems research support. FAIR Health qualifies as a public charity under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code. FAIR Health possesses the nation's largest collection of commercial healthcare claims data, which includes over 48 billion claim records and is growing at a rate of over 3 billion claim records a year. FAIR Health licenses its commercial data and data products—including benchmark modules, data visualizations, custom analytics and market indices—to commercial insurers and self-insurers, employers, providers, hospitals and healthcare systems, government agencies, researchers and others. Certified by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as a national Qualified Entity, FAIR Health also receives data representing the experience of all individuals enrolled in traditional Medicare Parts A, B and D, which accounts for a separate collection of over 48 billion claim records; FAIR Health includes among the commercial claims data in its database, data on Medicare Advantage enrollees. FAIR Health can produce insightful analytic reports and data products based on combined Medicare and commercial claims data for government, providers, payors and other authorized users. FAIR Health's free, awardwinning, national consumer websites are fairhealthconsumer.org and fairhealthconsumidor.org. For more information on FAIR Health, visit fairhealth.org.

FAIR Health, Inc.
800 Third Avenue, Suite 900
New York, NY 10022
212-370-0704
fairhealth.org
fairhealthconsumer.org
fairhealthconsumidor.org

Copyright 2024, FAIR Health, Inc. All rights reserved.

