

ACP supports expanded role of telemedicine for health care

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Photo: U.S. National Institutes of Health

(HealthDay)—Telemedicine can be beneficial, within the framework of an established physician-patient relationship, according to a position paper published online Sept. 8 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Hilary Daniel and Lois Snyder Sulmasy, J.D., on behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP) Health and Public Policy Committee, reviewed studies, reports, and surveys on all applications and uses of [telemedicine](#) and made recommendations to guide use of telemedicine.

According to the position paper, the ACP supports the expanded role of telemedicine as a mode of [health care delivery](#). Professional and

responsible telemedicine can take place when a valid patient-physician relationship has been established. Telehealth activities can address the needs of all patients, and should consider those with low literacy or low technologic literacy. Telehealth activities should be supported by ongoing commitment of federal funds. Physicians should use their professional judgment about whether telemedicine is appropriate for a patient. Physicians should ensure telemedicine is secure and compliant with security and privacy regulations. Evidence-based guidelines and clinical guidance should be developed for physicians and clinicians on appropriate use of telemedicine.

"By establishing a balanced and thoughtful framework for the practice, use, and reimbursement of telemedicine in primary care, patients, [physicians](#), and the health care system will realize the full potential of telemedicine," the authors write.

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