

Reminders for Primary Care Practices

Supporting Patients Through COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present challenges for primary care providers and their patients. Find below a list of activities that are essential to ensuring continuity of care during the pandemic.

Encourage patients to take advantage of telehealth

Use our [patient outreach tools](#) to identify patients at risk for severe illness due to COVID-19. Limit high-risk patients' exposure to COVID-19 by offering to hold their next appointment virtually. Many of the services and reimbursement rates that were established during the beginning of the pandemic are still in place, especially for patients with Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, and Medicaid Managed Care.

Continue universal screening for social needs and depression

- Create custom questionnaires in your EHR to assess the social determinants of your patients' health including housing, food security, and barriers to medication adherence.
- COVID-19 has brought about a spike in depression rates. Screen every patient for depression using the PHQ-2 and follow up when applicable using the PHQ-9.

Remind your team of community resources and educational materials

- Share [resources for New Yorkers](#) that offer support for food, employment, health insurance, housing, and more.
- Contact your NYC REACH specialist or nycreach@health.nyc.gov for a customized list of social services available to your patients.
- Connect with your pharmacy partners to find out how they can help your patients take their medication (e.g., blister packaging, prescription reminders, delivery).
- Refer patients to the [COVID-19 Webpage](#) for any questions related to the pandemic.

Contact and support patients who still need a COVID-19 vaccine

A strong recommendation from a health care provider is a key factor in whether a patient will be vaccinated against COVID-19. All care team members can help build vaccine confidence.

- Identify and contact COVID-19 vaccine eligible patients. If you do not administer COVID-19 vaccinations at your practice, you can use the [NYC COVID-19 Vaccine Finder](#) to schedule an appointment for a patient.
- Document all patient COVID-19 vaccinations in your EHR.
- Use your EHR to configure [Clinical Decision Support for COVID-19 vaccination](#).
- Refer to tip sheets and guides [on talking with patients about vaccines](#).

For questions about any of these tasks, contact your NYC REACH specialist or email nycreach@health.nyc.gov.