

# Telehealth Utilization in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery

Robert L. Parisien MD, Max Shin BA, David P. Trofa MD, Aman Prasad BS, Xinning Li MD, William N. Levine MD, John M. Flynn MD, Theodore J. Ganley MD

*Investigation Performed at the University of Pennsylvania and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

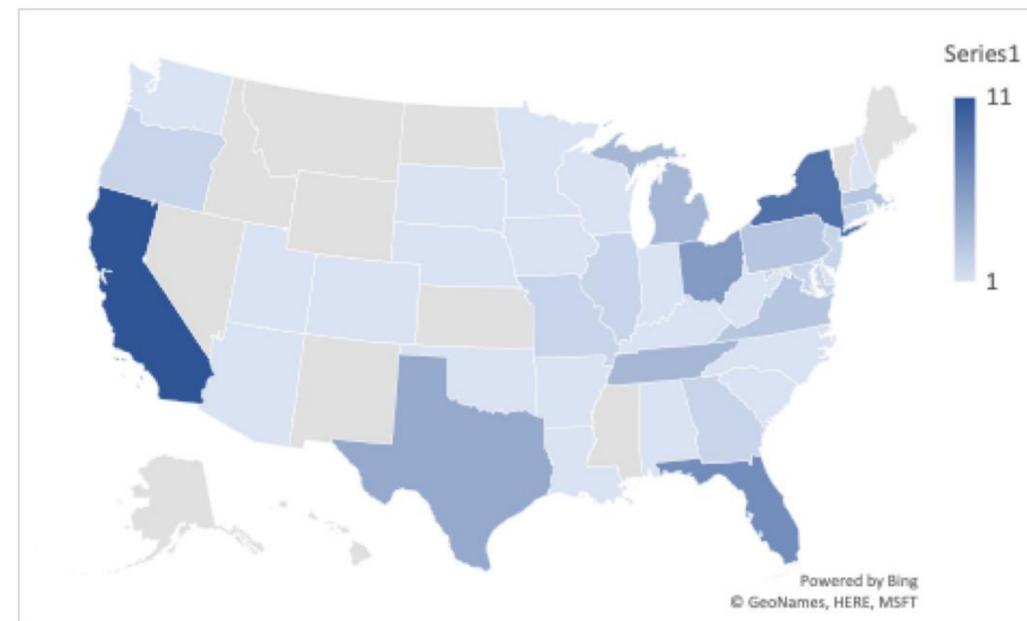
## Introduction

The primary purpose of this investigation was to assess the current utilization of telehealth capabilities of pediatric orthopaedic departments at children's hospitals across the United States (U.S.) and to determine how practice patterns have been directly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. A secondary objective is to explore the particular technologic platforms being utilized to conduct telehealth services.

## Methods

One hundred four pediatric academic orthopaedic departments within children's hospitals across the United States were directly contacted via telephone between April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 and April 27<sup>th</sup> 2020 to ascertain their utilization of telehealth services. We investigated each institution's current telehealth utilization and if such offerings have been recently implemented as a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pediatric Orthopaedic Departments Providing Telehealth Services as of April 27<sup>th</sup> 2020



## Results

Of the 104 children's hospitals contacted across the U.S., 100 pediatric orthopaedic departments in 39 states responded for an overall response rate of 96%. Of the 95 institutions offering telehealth services, 83 (87.4%) cited the COVID-19 pandemic as the impetus for implementation of telehealth services. Of these, 29 (31%) institutions began offering services from March 16<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> and 34 (36%) institutions began offering services from April 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. The four most common platforms being utilized to conduct telehealth visits are Epic MyChart with Zoom (38%), Zoom independently (18%), Doxy.me (8%) and Epic MyChart with VidyConnect (7.4%). Regional analysis demonstrated an 800% increase in telehealth services provided in the state of New York, a 600% increase in Florida, a 500% increase in Texas, a 400% increase in Michigan, a 200% increase in Pennsylvania and an 1100% increase in California.

## Discussion

This study demonstrates the rapid response measures instituted by pediatric orthopaedic institutions to meet the fundamental needs of the pediatric population during this unprecedented pandemic and may provide a new framework for the future utilization of telehealth services in the United States.