

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

COVID-19 DIGITAL INEQUITIES IMPACTING ACCESS

As community health centers (CHCs) serve on the frontlines of COVID-19, they continue to care for their patients through remote and virtual technology. Virtual care allows patients and providers to communicate by video or audio with available technology and Internet access. However, there are significant challenges to implement this care model that highlight the inequities in digital care. In some communities, CHCs and their patients lack the necessary access to Internet or broadband services, devices to receive or provide care, and familiarity to utilize technology.

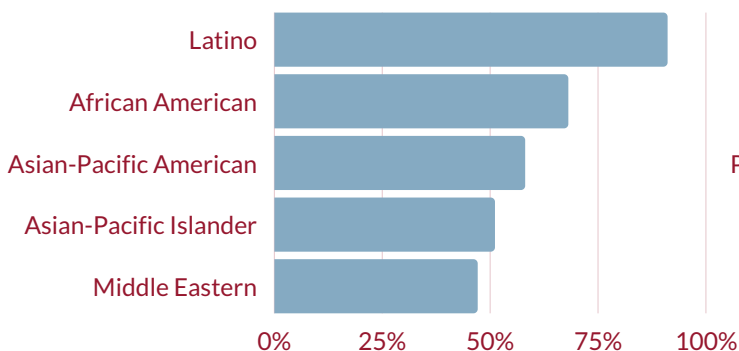
In an effort to better understand these disparities, CPCA distributed a survey in April 2020 to community based organizations (CBOs) working closely with patients and communities being served by CHCs. The analysis below reflects 92 responses from CHCs, school educators, legal assisters, wellness centers, and local social rights groups. Almost half of these CBOs serve 70 or more community members daily.



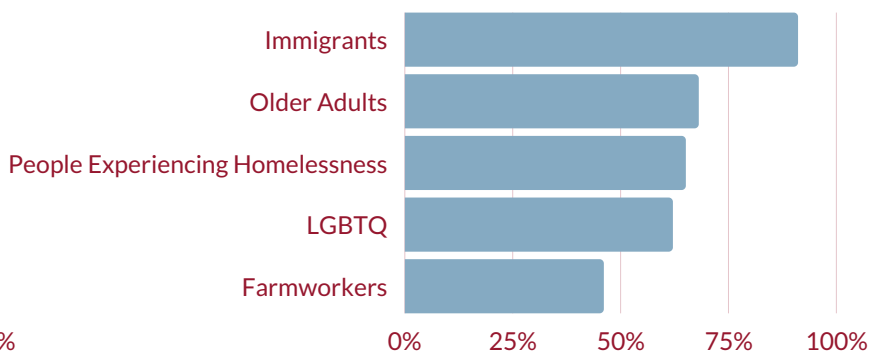
More than 90% of patients are Latino or immigrants.

In some survey questions, respondents could answer the question by selecting more than one option and consequently the total percentages exceed 100.

RACE/ETHNICITY



SPECIAL POPULATIONS



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Internet is a critical access point for health care, especially in rural areas with provider shortages.² Gaps in access disproportionately impact **LOW-INCOME, RURAL, ELDERLY, AFRICAN AMERICAN, & LATINO** households.⁴



1 in 8 CA households lack Internet access³

due to the high costs of broadband services and/or computing devices, resulting in heavy reliance on cell phones.



COST INHIBITS INTERNET ACCESS FOR MORE THAN



1 in 5 Californians¹



MORE THAN HALF

of CBO's patients who are racial and ethnic minorities or special populations lack internet access.

INCREASED TELEHEALTH RESULTS IN:

- Increased ability to provide behavioral health services, especially as California continues to face a provider shortage.
- Removal of many barriers to care, including transportation, childcare, and requesting time-off from work.

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2 out of 3 patients



rely on cell phones to receive virtual care

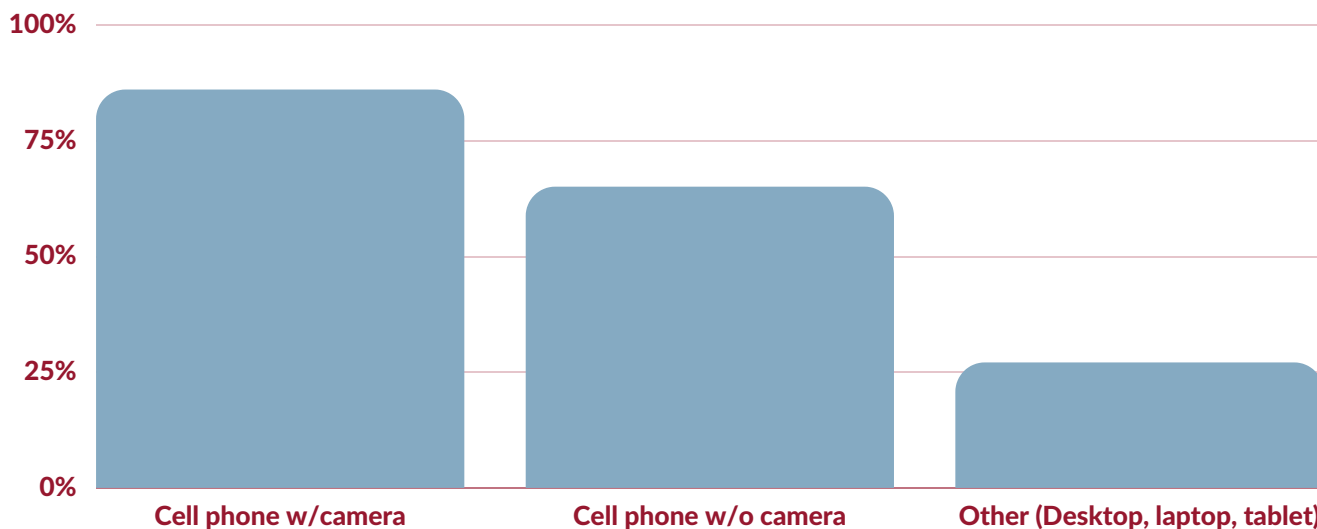


1 out of 4 patients



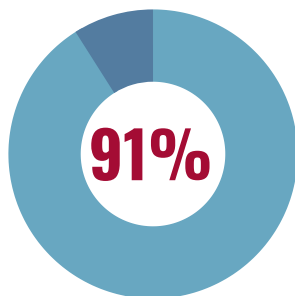
rely on non-mobile devices to receive virtual care

PATIENT ACCESS TO VIRTUAL CARE DEVICES

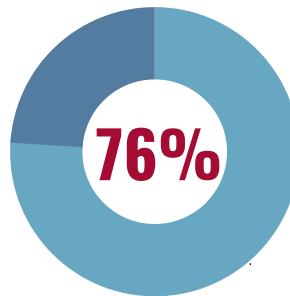


91%

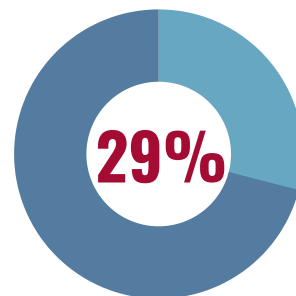
of patients are most comfortable using phones for care



Calling



Texting



Video Chat