

# Saving Your Practice: Your COVID-19 Action Plan

*Updated April 27, 2020*



COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID





You can count on us. The whole team at Podiatry Content Connection is working hard to keep you informed, up-to-date, and with an action plan to move forward.

As a “Podiatry only” company, we are in the unique position to do a nation-wide temperature check on the industry that is your bread and butter, and ours. Last week we reached out to 155 Podiatrists across the country. This is what we learned:

- Most offices are still open and still seeing patients. Those docs not seeing patients (a small %) are catching up on practice management and paperwork.
- Elective surgery has been put on hold. Routine care has taken a back seat. A fair number of elderly patients have cancelled or postponed their appointments.
- Patients in pain (heel pain, ankle pain, ingrown toenails and gout) still need to see a Podiatrist ASAP. From all reports, Google Ads that are pay-per-click are hitting their max budgets when they use keywords that target painful conditions. This shows that patients are still “searching” (via Google) to find solutions and providers.

There is great hope for optimism: We are busy helping Podiatrists survive and adapt during this challenging time. We are doing everything from COVID-19 messages on your website to offering **TeleHealth services... at No Charge**. We are working hard and are fully committed to supporting Podiatrists at this critical time.

**Please check back often as this ebook is updated as new information is available.**

If you would like to learn more about how we might help you at this challenging time, feel free to call Randy Rosler directly at 917 572-5088.

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## TeleHealth Services

There has been a recent and rapid adoption of TeleHealth services, and many of the doctors we speak with are able to get paid for these remote appointments. The insurance companies have loosened their requirements in terms of face-to-face visits, and HIPAA regulations have been temporarily relaxed. Triage calls can be billed too; patients are out there, and they need your advice. There is a societal need, and in many places, a mandate to keep visits to the emergency rooms to a minimum. This is why staying available to handle foot and ankle pain is essential.



## Pro-Active Patient Relations

**Reach out to current patients about their scheduled appointments before they have to reach out to you.**

Many patients assume that you are closed. They don't necessarily realize that podiatrists offer an essential service that keeps patients away from the emergency room.

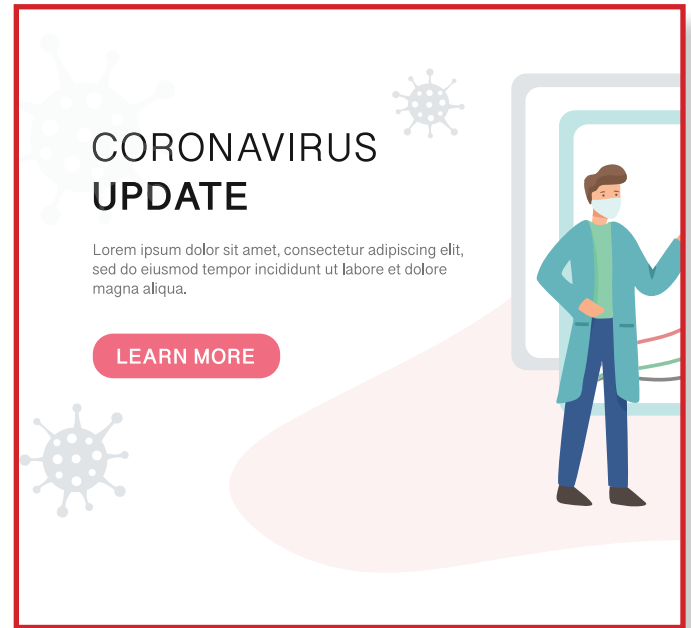
We recommend calling everyone who has an appointment booked with you through June. Convey that you hope they and their families are healthy. Explain that you are still seeing patients in-office (and are taking steps to ensure their safety). If they are self-isolating, offer to switch their appointment to a TeleHealth visit. If they are insistent on not doing either, rebook them, moving their appointment date ahead as warranted. It is important to keep them on your schedule!

It is also important to setup an email campaign to let all of your patients know you are OPEN. Podiatry Content Connection can help with our campaign software: Feedback Reviews and Campaigns, or we can suggest another email program to use.



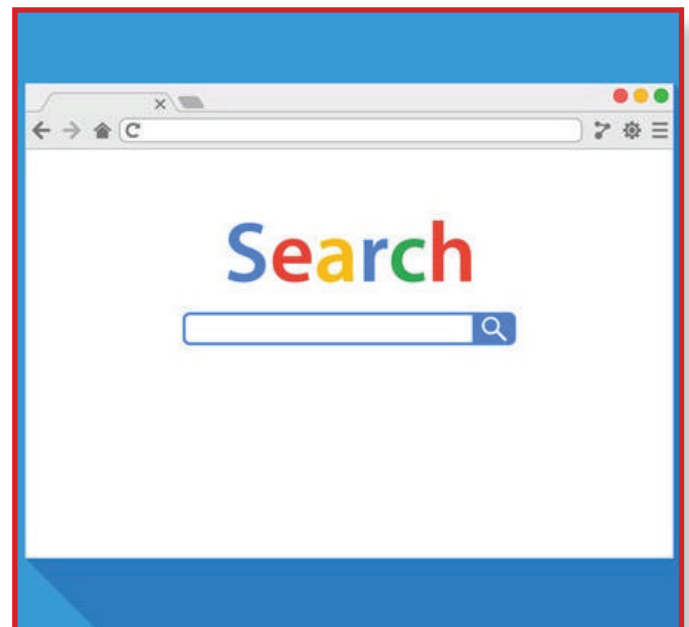
## Messaging

Patients want to know that you have a clean environment and that your office practices social distancing. Stating this on your website and emailing your existing patients helps to communicate this message of overall safety. Some podiatrists are having patients check in and then wait in their car until they're called. Let your patients know that you're ahead of this crisis and that you care about their safety.



## Google Advertising

We've seen a definite shift in web searches, with most now leaning more toward foot and ankle pain. Also, the vast majority of Google budgets within the last 30 days have been met. What this means is that there are still patients looking for treatment and actively seeking out your help. We've found that crafting ads that reflect the current climate are very successful in reaching patients that need you. Ingrown toenails and heel pain treatment are currently among the most popular search terms.



# Government Support

## The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

On April 24th, President Trump signed a bill for second round funding of the [Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\)](#), a CARES Act program. This is a forgivable loan program created to help small businesses stay afloat for at least two months, assuming that 75% of the loan goes toward payroll. More than \$320 billion (Source: NBC) has been earmarked for this round. The initial round was plagued with accusations of unfair distribution and ran out of money quickly. The new online application process has been streamlined and opens on April 27th, 2020.

The Small Business Administration, and several local disaster recovery and stimulus programs, have mostly been oversubscribed and are not available at this time, though it is worthwhile to check.

[Economic Injury Disaster Loan](#): SBA Loan (part of the loan is forgiven)

[USCOC Brochure Explaining Loan](#)



U.S. Small Business  
Administration



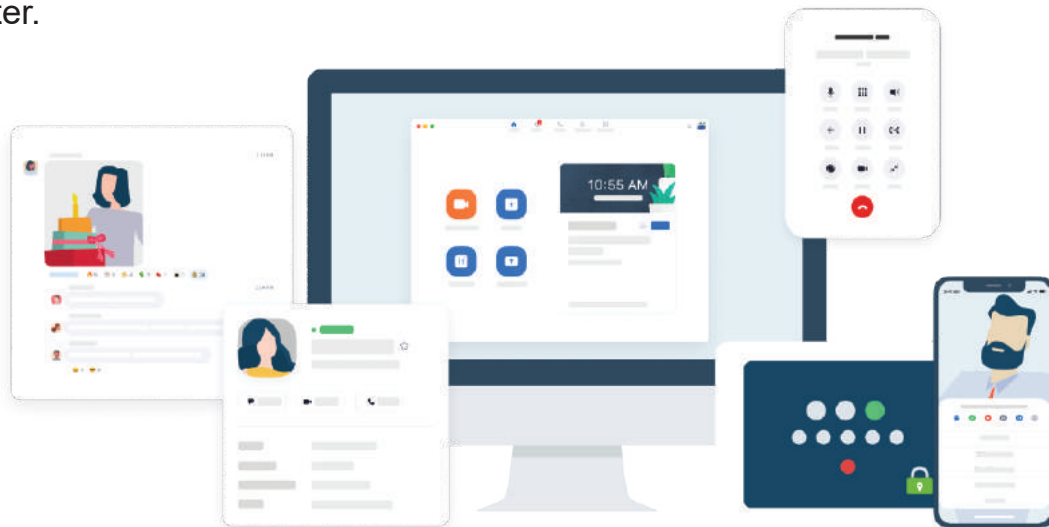
## TeleHealth Options

During these trying times it's important, now more than ever, to stay updated on the different outlets you may utilize when it comes to treating patients safely. With that being said, we've done some research on the different digital formats of meeting with patients, otherwise known as TeleHealth, or telemedicine. Getting on board with TeleHealth is important for several reasons:

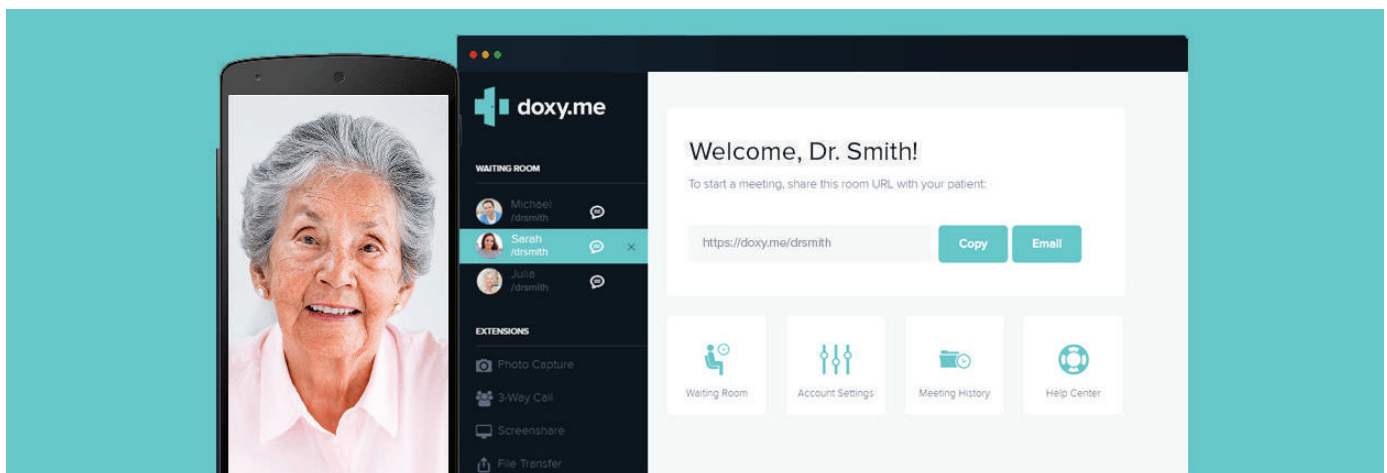
1. If you're not available for foot or ankle pain treatment, your patients may end up in the ER or the hospital. No one wants that to happen right now. Your patients need your advice.
2. It can help offset losses from routine care. Medicare and most private insurance plans are allowing for telehealth claims. Check with your insurance providers to see what's covered.

Here are some tips to help get that process started:

**Zoom (zoom.us):** Zoom is a video communications app that allows for remote conferencing through the use of video chatting, online meetings, chat, and mobile communication. Zoom also offers a separate HIPAA compliance (by means of a Business Associate's agreement entered into with Zoom when you start). Free options are available as well, but due to increased demand, Zoom is no longer providing call-in numbers for the conferences. If you choose to use this service (or any other video conferencing app), we recommend you upgrade to the paid model (starting at \$15/month) so you don't have to rely on the patient having a microphone with their computer.



**Doxy.me:** Doxy.me is a cloud-based, HIPAA compliant, electronic medical records and telemedicine solution. They also offer both free and paid models. Once you schedule an appointment with a patient, Doxy.me will create a link and send it via SMS or email to the patient. The patient would then follow the link to a virtual waiting room to begin the appointment.



**Other compliant services through your EHR:** All EHRs are not created equal, and not all of them offer telehealth options. Contact your EHR company to find out what's available to you.

**Google Hangouts, etc.:** While Google Hangouts and other video chats apps can be a convenient way to connect with family and friends, it's important to realize that they're not HIPAA compliant. Even if you sign a BAA with Google (possible if you sign up for the paid "G-Suite" service), it still doesn't cover video chat through Google Hangouts. While it's true that the government has temporarily relaxed some of HIPAA rules, this should not be viewed as a long term solution.

**Facetime, Google Duo:** Similar to Google Hangouts, Facetime and Google Duo are video chat apps that work with both Iphone and Android devices. Because these apps are generally pre-installed on the phones, they can be a particularly convenient service for connecting with patients. Again, this is not a long term solution, but can be considered an option for the time being.





# PCC Is Here To Help

[Podiatry Content Connection](#) is watching out for you:

## TeleHealth

- Setup charges **WAIVED**
- Monthly fee **WAIVED**
- Other companies are charging \$199-\$299 per month.

## Google Ads (with new messaging tailored to the times)

- Setup charges **WAIVED**
- Monthly fee **WAIVED**

## Targeted Reviews Reputation Management System

- Setup charges **WAIVED**
- Monthly fees for 6 months **WAIVED**

## Podiatric Educational Video Library for Your Website

- **NO CHARGE** (for new clients)

## Feedback and Reviews Program

- Email campaigns promoting TeleHealth (current F&R clients only) **NO CHARGE**

We can announce your practice's use of TeleHealth directly on your website. Depending on which option you choose, we may put a button on your site to help patients start the TeleHealth appointment.

We're all in this together and want you to know that we're here to help you adapt to these times. If you have any questions, or would like more details about TeleHealth solutions, please do not hesitate to email us at [support@podiatrycc.com](mailto:support@podiatrycc.com) or give us a call at **(718) 475-9449**.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Hartman, CEO  
Podiatry Content Connection  
<https://podiatrycontentconnection.com/>

