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Health Pulse

Exclusive: NY's drop in telehealth use outpaces national, regional averages

New York state is outpacing both the Northeast and the U.S. in telehealth usage declines, according to new data compiled exclusively for Crain's.

Virtual care accounted for 5.4% of all medical claim lines statewide in March, down from 5.8% in February, national nonprofit Fair Health found in its latest analysis of private health care claims data.

The state's roughly 6.8% drop was greater than both the national decrease of 5.1% and the Northeast's 5.7% decrease between February and March, the nonprofit found.

Virtual medical visits have been declining as more New Yorkers go back to doctors' offices, Crain's reported in May. The new data, released Tuesday, point to a continuation of that trend.

"In New York, as in other parts of the country, the Covid-19 pandemic is proceeding to a new stage marked by widespread vaccination," Fair Health President Robin Gelburd said of the declines.

Mental health conditions accounted for about 63% of the state's telehealth claims in March, followed by joint or soft tissue diseases and substance-use disorders. Covid-19 and digestive issues were also among the most common diagnoses cited in the March telehealth claims, replacing hypertension and diabetes.

Developmental disorders and acute respiratory diseases were more common diagnoses nationally, the data show.