

## How to compare virtual care service models



Virtual care is a great way for companies to give employees access to healthcare services that meet their individual needs. No two virtual care providers are exactly alike. They all offer different medical services, coverage structures, and pricing plans.

Understanding the different service models for virtual care will help in selecting the best provider for your employees' needs and your organization's budget.

### Core features

Virtual care is broadly defined as online visits with a healthcare provider. However, there are other important core features to look for when choosing a virtual care provider, such as:

#### CORE FEATURES OF A QUALITY VIRTUAL CARE PLATFORM

- Online doctor visits
- Specialty healthcare on demand or by appointment
- Mental health therapy
- Prescriptions and renewals
- Prescription delivery
- Referrals for specialists
- Lab requisitions
- Electronic medical records
- Care navigation services
- Dependent access
- And more

## Easy access to virtual care services

Access to virtual care services can vary greatly from one provider to another. For instance, some providers offer 24/7 access to care while others use a fixed schedule, with restrictions on weekends and holidays. Wait time to speak with a doctor can be a few minutes on one platform, and up to 36 hours or more on another.

Geographical barriers can also apply, affecting the level of service in some provinces. Your virtual care provider should offer services in both English and French.



## Breaking down the different service models

When evaluating a virtual care provider, the first thing you should consider is the provider's medical care delivery model. Some virtual care platforms allow patients to speak with a physician directly while others require them to speak with a care coordinator first, and possibly a nurse or other providers before being able to see a doctor.

### SOME OF THE MOST COMMON SERVICE MODELS FOR VIRTUAL CARE ARE:

- **Triage / concierge model.** The patient completes a lengthy intake form or questionnaire, then speaks with a nurse or care coordinator. A visit with a physician is sometimes later scheduled. Wait time to speak with a doctor can go from 4 to 48 hours.
- **Booked appointments model.** The patient schedules an appointment with a physician or a nurse practitioner. Wait time to speak with a doctor can go from 1 to 3 hours, or days depending on how busy the service is.
- **Maple on-demand physician-led model.** The patient can speak to a doctor in minutes and is directly connected to a General Practitioner who can treat, diagnose, and prescribe.

# How an on-demand, physician-led model leads to a better patient experience



	Triage / concierge model	Booked appointments model	Maple on-demand physician-led model
Company	Virtual care provider #1	Virtual care provider #2	<b>maple</b>
Description of care model	The patient first speaks with a nurse or care coordinator. A visit with a physician may be scheduled for a later time or date.	The patient schedules an appointment with a physician or a nurse practitioner.	The patient is directly connected to a physician who can treat, diagnose, and prescribe.
Model is best for	Non-urgent cases that could be resolved without medical intervention.	Non-urgent medical issues and patients with flexible schedules.	Resolving the majority of primary care issues quickly, as well as non-urgent medical issues.
24/7, 365 physician availability	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>✓</b>
Wait time to see a doctor	Minimum: 4-6 hours. Up to several days.	Minimum: 1-3 hours. Up to several days.	Five minutes or less, 24/7.
Medical record-keeping	No medical record-keeping, making it difficult for providers to understand their patient's medical history.	No medical record-keeping, making it difficult for providers to understand their patient's medical history.	Comprehensive medical records automatically created and stored with each visit.
First call resolution	<b>~40-50%</b>	<b>~50-70%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Communication method with doctor	Solely video.	Video, some providers offer text messaging.	Text messaging, audio, or video chat.

## Procurement models

Some companies and organizations work directly with virtual care providers while others receive virtual care coverage from insurers or other channel partners. Here's how these two procurement models work:



**Direct procurement:** Employers and organizations can choose to work directly with a virtual care provider to administer programs. This can facilitate end-to-end processes such as onboarding, integration, coordinating eligibility, account management, and more.



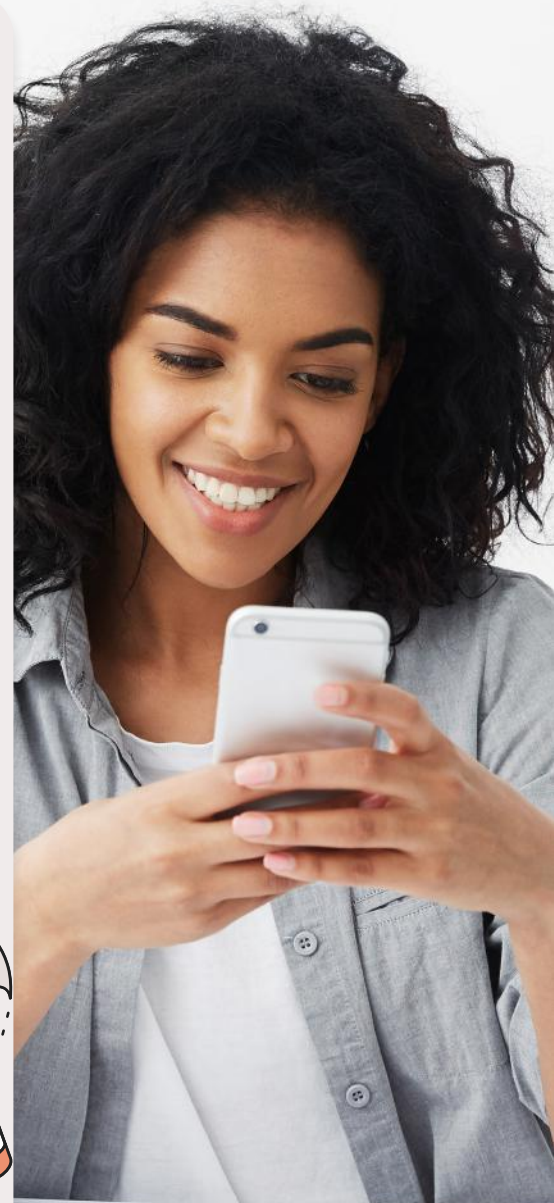
**Third-party procurement:** Virtual care providers can also work with a variety of insurers and channel partners to create pricing efficiencies, coordinate billing, and provide seamless eligibility management for a better employee experience.



## Choosing the right virtual care provider

Comparing different virtual care providers requires the consideration of multiple factors. Here's a high-level checklist to help with your due diligence process:

- What are the provider's hours of operation? Can my employees see a doctor outside of work hours, or if medical issues arise overnight?
- What is user onboarding like? Will my plan administrators be given tools to seamlessly manage eligibility? Can these tools connect with my payroll software?
- Is the platform simple to use? Or does seeing a doctor require a complicated process of steps? For online platforms, each step to complete a process is statistically proven to discourage and decrease usage.
- Are patients connected to a doctor every time? Or will they go through multiple steps only to be denied care, or to be redirected to educational materials they could have easily Googled?
- Can patients receive prescriptions and lab requisitions over the virtual care platform?
- Is the platform highly secure, with ample technical documentation to prove that patient information is protected?
- Does the virtual care provider have a proven track record of successful corporate partnerships? Do they actively manage the program in partnership with my HR team, including robust reports and support for marketing and communications?



If you have any questions about Maple's physician-led service model, don't hesitate to get in touch.



For more information, visit [getmaple.ca/business](https://getmaple.ca/business) or contact us at [sales@getmaple.ca](mailto:sales@getmaple.ca)