



Rendia and Telehealth Yields Improved Efficiency and a 10% Increase in Conversions

COVID-19 changed the practice's appointment model and patient education – for the better.

BY THE NUMBERS

10%

How much Kugler Vision **increased conversion rates for elective surgery** since switching primarily to telemedicine appointments using Exam Mode.

30 minutes

Average time saved by the Kugler Vision team on each consultation.

83%

Percent of patients who say they **will continue to use telemedicine** after the pandemic.

OVERVIEW:

Kugler Vision in Omaha, Nebraska, specializes in laser vision correction for patients at all stages of life, offering a variety of procedures including [LASIK](#), SMILE, Visian ICL, PRK, Corneal Inlays and Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE). Patients have visited [Kugler Vision](#) from 48 states and numerous countries. The Kugler Vision team includes two refractive surgeons and two optometrists.

While the practice was set up to offer telemedicine before COVID-19, virtual visits became the primary method of seeing patients when they reopened the office in April 2020 after weeks of state-mandated

shutdowns. Kugler Vision deployed [Rendia](#) for use during telemedicine appointments and has seen a 10% increase in overall conversions in 2020 compared to 2019.

“In a telemedicine situation, a 2D physical eye model is not very valuable. It’s more effective to use a tool like Rendia’s Exam Mode that’s optimized for a screen.”

– Lance Kugler, M.D.

HYBRID APPOINTMENTS SAVE TIME

Even after routine office visits resumed, Kugler Vision continued using telemedicine, implementing a hybrid appointment model that many medical practices have adopted for its efficiency and reduced risk of COVID-19 exposure. It looks like this: Patients come into the office for their diagnostic exams, which are referred to as VisionTrack Assessments. Then patients are scheduled at a later date for a short telehealth consultation with their surgeon to review the results and customized procedure recommendation.

“There’s no way we would be where we are without Rendia.”

– Bret Martin, business development manager

“I think Rendia is well positioned to be a key component of the telemedicine world.”

– Lance Kugler, M.D.

Even though this model requires two appointments instead of one, the Kugler Vision team saves 30 minutes per consultation by doing the testing and doctor visits separately. Patients also see significant time savings. The first visit is more efficient, since there is no scheduling around or waiting for the doctor. The old paradigm was to schedule a 90-minute visit at a time when the patient, the doctor, the testing room and the technicians were all available. Now, it’s much easier to schedule patients for diagnostic appointments, and they are typically in and out in less than an hour.

In addition to time savings, there have been additional cost savings for the practice with this appointment model. “We have decreased our clinician staff load. We can see the same number of patients in less time with less staff,” said Dr. Kugler.

The telemedicine portion of the visit is more efficient and streamlined as well. Dr. Kugler may spend the same amount of time with each patient — approximately 15 minutes — but he can log on promptly at the appointment time from anywhere he may be and see seven or eight patients in a two-hour period, he said. “No time is being wasted — not my time or their time.”

The time between when patients call for an appointment and when the practice can get them in is shorter, as in the time between when patients get their testing and when they are seen by a surgeon to go over their results.

Telemedicine was especially helpful during the winter months when inclement weather kept people at home. Virtual visits allowed Dr. Kugler to keep his appointments without cancellations or rescheduling.

ABOUT RENDIA

Rendia is an educational software that blends stunning clinical artwork with interactive technology to help medical professionals and patients better understand each other. By bridging the communication gap between doctors and patients, Rendia empowers patients to make informed health decisions and attain superior outcomes.



INCREASING KNOWLEDGE AND CONVERSIONS

While Dr. Kugler used Rendia from time to time with patients before the pandemic, now he uses it in the majority of his telemedicine appointments. During the virtual visit, Dr. Kugler will share his screen to show the patient Exam Mode animations and scans of their own eye. Exam Mode shows a detailed, realistic, interactive, 3D view of the eye’s anatomy and lets patients visualize condition progression as well as the benefits of various treatment options. Providers can show patients what myopia looks like in the eye, for example, and animate an RLE procedure. This can clear up misconceptions and move the conversation forward.

While those unfamiliar with telemedicine might make the assumption that it's complicated or impersonal, said Dr. Kugler, "I actually find it to be a more engaging and personalized experience than being live in an exam room with a patient."

Dr. Kugler has also started using Rendia's [Outcome Simulator](#) during telemedicine consultations. This advanced vision simulator can be customized to patients to show them what their current vision looks like and what it could look like after various treatment options. "That's been very valuable in terms of explaining the side effects of lenses, like halo and glare. The visual is important for people," he said. "I've found it to be a useful tool. It's easier to use in telemedicine because I'm already on the computer."

Outcome Simulator has the added benefit of helping build trust with patients. By showing them customized views of their current vision, this communicates knowledge and expertise. "If you can prove to patients that you understand what they're seeing, then they're going to trust you to fix it," said Dr. Kugler.

People unfamiliar with modern eye surgery may have fears or misconceptions about it, and Rendia combats those assumptions with clear, simple animations. Instead of leaving appointments confused or overwhelmed, patients can better understand and visualize their treatment options and possible outcomes to make a decision. That may be a reason for Kugler Vision's 10% increase in conversions since switching primarily to telemedicine using Rendia. "I truly believe if we were doing private telehealth appointments without Rendia, our conversions would be quite a bit lower," said business development manager Bret Martin. "Rendia really shows patients how easy it is."

RENDIA: A KEY COMPONENT OF DOCTORS' TELEMEDICINE OFFERINGS

While at the beginning of the pandemic it may have seemed that telemedicine was a stopgap measure during an unprecedented health crisis, it has become clear that virtual care offers significant benefits for doctors and patients alike and is here to stay. According to Medical Economics, "Telemedicine isn't simply a temporary solution used during COVID-19, and it will largely dictate the future of healthcare."

As Dr. Kugler put it, "COVID-19 gave us a reason to move forward with telemedicine." And now that Kugler Vision has seen the benefits, the practice will continue offering virtual visits wherever possible. While a common concern is that patient education is more difficult to achieve virtually compared to in-person, "I would argue with Rendia, it can even be better," he said.

RENDIA'S IMPACT ON TELEMEDICINE

During the coronavirus pandemic, Kugler Vision pivoted to telehealth for providing patient care. Their hybrid appointment model deployed Rendia's Exam Mode to allow the team to navigate virtual consultations without sacrificing quality. Through leveraging Rendia's practice enablement system, Kugler Vision saved time, built trust with patients and grew the practice.

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Rendia.com • sales@rendia.com • 877.321.5481