



2 Telehealth Stocks That Could Boom in This Pandemic

Description

Social distancing and a shortage of healthcare talent has compelled the world to reconsider how we deliver medical care. Fortunately, the technology that helps you stay in touch with family and work from home during this pandemic could also help you get critical care if needed.

Telehealth startups are connecting potential patients with medical practitioners through video conferences and mobile apps. The ability to speak to a professional over the phone within minutes is a game-changer for Canada's healthcare system. Two publicly listed companies are at the forefront of this revolution.

Telus Health

Telecommunications giant **TELUS** ([TSX:T](#))([NYSE:TU](#)) was far ahead of the curve. The company launched TELUS Health, its digital healthcare subsidiary, in 2007. That's right, TELUS has been a major telehealth player for over a decade.

The subsidiary now offers electronic medical record management services for clinics and healthcare professionals and group health benefits for organizations. It also offers a consumer telehealth app called *Babylon*. The app could gain more traction during this crisis.

The company is leveraging its virtual healthcare infrastructure to assist Canadians with medical support during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Users can check their symptoms and connect with a pharmacy or clinic while isolating at home. These services should see an uptick as more people recognize the value of virtual healthcare during this crisis.

The healthcare subsidiary doesn't contribute much to TELUS's annual revenue yet. However, the company expects it to drive margins and growth in the near future, as the number of users expands exponentially.

WELL Health

Telehealth startup **WELL Health Technologies** ([TSX:WELL](#)) has been investing in tech-enabled clinics and a sophisticated medical data platform for years. The company already serves 8,200 doctors across 1,446 clinics in British Columbia. It also owns and manages 20 clinics in the province.

As the pandemic erupted, WELL Health deployed resources early to expand its telehealth portfolio. The company invested \$5.94 million in telehealth startup Insig Corporation and launched its own telehealth service called VirtualClinic+. The company also launched the Automated COVID-19 Triage Tool (ACTT), an automated phone, SMS and web-based healthcare platform for Canadians.

Unsurprisingly, the business is [rapidly accelerating](#). Sales have tripled over the past year, and the gross margin has widened to 33.5%. The company also achieved a small profit in the last three months of 2019 (roughly \$216,067). Hong Kong's richest man, Li Ka-Shing, doubled down on the stock this year and now owns a significant stake in the firm.

WELL Health is one of the most underrated healthcare startups in the country. Add it to your watch list if you're looking for a speculative bet on the cutting edge of healthcare technology.

Foolish takeaway

It's time for virtual healthcare and telehealth services to shine. There's never been a better opportunity for investors to bet on the obvious future of our medical system.

Telus stock offers a more robust proxy for this revolution. Its telehealth subsidiary is well funded and could drive tremendous growth in the years ahead. Meanwhile, WELL Health could be multibagger if it secures a dominant position in this rapidly evolving industry. Watch this space closely.

Good luck and stay safe.

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TICKERS GLOBAL

1. NYSE:TU (TELUS)
2. TSX:T (TELUS)
3. TSX:WELL (WELL Health Technologies Corp.)

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