**Additional CMS Changes for Telehealth**

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| https://static.ctctcdn.com/letters/images/sys/S.gif | https://mlsvc01-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/f9a32e1d001/c0ed0702-acb4-44da-ad36-b6ffaa2e3996.png |

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced through a [**press release**](https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-issues-second-round-sweeping-changes-support-us-healthcare-system-during-covid?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107)  and updated COVID-19 Waivers Summary Document and [**provider-specific factsheets**](https://cchpca.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c9fa99b7520aedfca5c453103&id=a69a8fffdd&e=b3176aeb7c)  additional expansions in telehealth policy to address needs related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. CCHP has updated its [**Federal Telehealth Policy**](https://www.cchpca.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/CORONAVIRUS%20TELEHEALTH%20POLICY%20FACT%20SHEET%20APRIL%2030%202020%20FINAL.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107) and[**FQHC/RHC factsheets**](https://www.cchpca.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/CMS%20FQHC%20RHC%20FACT%20SHEET%204.30.20%20FINAL.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107) to reflect these new policies. One of the five stated goals of the changes is to increase access to telehealth for Medicare patients so that they can access care safely from their homes.

**The major telehealth changes in Medicare include the following:**

* All health care professionals that are eligible to bill Medicare will be allowed to be reimbursed for telehealth-delivered services, including physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists. Previously these practitioners had been excluded from Medicare reimbursement for telehealth delivered services. Hospitals will also be able to furnish certain services remotely provided by hospital-based practitioners to Medicare patients registered as hospital outpatients (including those at home).
* Hospitals can qualify for the originating site facility fee for telehealth services furnished by hospital-based practitioners to Medicare patients registered as hospital outpatients when the patient is at home.
* CMS is waiving the requirement for use of video technology for interactive telecommunications system for certain services. This only applies to codes for audio-only telephone evaluation and management services and behavioral health counseling and education services. Other codes still require live video interaction. A list of eligible codes and whether or not they qualify for audio-only is available HERE. FQHCs and RHCs will also be able to bill these codes, although special billing requirements apply for these entities.
* CMS is increasing the payment amount for telephone visits to match payments for similar office and outpatient visits.
* There will be an expedited process to review services that can be furnished via telehealth and added to CMS' eligible telehealth list, as opposed to the usual process which takes almost a year.

Other topics addressed include increased flexibilities for Medicare Shared Savings ACOs, new Medicaid and Medicare rules aimed at expanding COVID-19 diagnostic testing, increasing hospital and workforce capacity and decreasing administrative burdens. To read more about the changes, see [**CMS' summary of their waivers**](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107) and the most recent [**press release**](https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-issues-second-round-sweeping-changes-support-us-healthcare-system-during-covid?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107).

 **CMS also updated several of their provider-specific factsheets, which are listed below:**

* [**Federally Qualified Health Center/Rural Health Clinic**](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-rural-health-clinics.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107)
* [**Hospitals**](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-hospitals.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107)
* [**Physicians and other Practitioners**](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-19-physicians-and-practitioners.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107)

CMS also made changes to their [**Medicare Learning Network (MLN) Matters guidance document**](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/se20016.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107) to Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics addressing changes to telehealth billing requirements and providing for additional flexibilities for audio-only telephone. To learn more about these changes, see [**CCH's factsheet on FQHCs/RHCs acting as distant site providers in Medicare**](https://www.cchpca.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/CMS%20FQHC%20RHC%20FACT%20SHEET%204.30.20%20FINAL.pdf?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107), which has been updated based on the most recent changes.

Visit[**CCHP's website**](https://www.cchpca.org/resources/covid-19-telehealth-coverage-policies?utm_source=Telehealth+Enthusiasts&utm_campaign=bee59bee5d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_30_11_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae00b0e89a-bee59bee5d-353240107) for more information on these changes.