

Using Telehealth to Integrate Behavioral Health Care



What is Telehealth?

Telehealth is the use of telecommunication and information technologies in order to provide behavioral health care at a distance. It helps eliminate distance barriers and can improve access to behavioral health services that would often not be consistently available in distant rural communities.

MDwise works collaboratively to improve access with the telehealth distance site and originating site. Our team is able to assist with forming a relationship with a distance site or with identifying an originating site by determining locations where there is a need for service.

DEFINITIONS

Distance Site:

Location of the provider rendering healthcare services.

Originating Site:

Location where the patient is physically located when services are provided through telehealth.

What is the Goal of Telehealth?

- To open access for behavioral health services due to a shortage of behavioral health providers.
- To improve behavioral health medication adherence and member adherence to appointments.
- To increase access to behavioral health services for adults who require the services of a psychiatrist and other behavioral health professionals.
- To improve behavioral health conditions and prevent inpatient admissions due to unmanaged conditions.
- To reduce the need for transportation services by bringing behavioral health service to the patient.

How Does it Work?

The behavioral health provider can meet with a member via teleconferencing when mental health services are needed. The telehealth provider is in a remote location and uses video conferencing to meet with a member in a private, office setting. The provider may be a mental health therapist, certified nurse specialist/APRN, or psychiatrist. The service must be medically necessary for the professional to meet with the member via teleconferencing.

Using telehealth services is a good way to help members have access to services not available otherwise. It is an effective and efficient use of resources that allows providers to bridge gaps in treatment services across the state. Bridging the gap between an inpatient hospitalization and the need for an outpatient appointment within 7 days is one way telehealth can help members.

As of October 1, 2017, the IHCP eliminated the requirement that telehealth services are covered only when the distant site (the location of the provider rendering services) and the originating site (the physical location of the patient) are greater than 20 miles apart. The distance requirement is eliminated for all provider types eligible to render telehealth services. (See IC 12-15-5-11. See [IHCP Bulletin 201807](#).)

Both the distant and originating site are eligible for reimbursement when the services rendered meet the definition of valid encounter and are consistent with the IHCP telemedicine policy. (See [IHCP Banner Page BR201409](#).)

Covered Services

- Consultation
- Office or other outpatient visits
- Individual psychotherapy
- Psychiatric diagnostic interview

Non-Covered Services

- Home health agencies or services
- Laboratory services
- Long-term care facilities
- Anesthesia services or nurse anesthetist services
- Services billed by school corporations



Contact Us

For more information on telehealth, please call us at

317-822-7300 ext. 5800 or call customer service at **1-800-356-1204**.



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