Maryland Health Care Commission - Telehealth
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https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hit/hit_telemedicine/hit_telemedicine.aspx

Overview

Telehealth is a maturing mode for delivering health care, health education, and health information services. Advances in information and communications technologies have enabled remote and interactive (two-way audio and video) services between health care consumers, patients, and caregivers. Traditionally, telehealth has been a mechanism to connect a patient at an originating (spoke) site to a licensed provider at a distant (hub) site, particularly in rural and other remote areas with provider shortages or inadequate access to health care services, such as specialty care. Today, telehealth is evolving to support a broad array of services, both clinical and non-clinical, as part of a multi-faceted health ecosystem that aims to empower providers to deliver more convenient, personalized, and cost-effective care. Telehealth is a promising and practical solution to improve care coordination, better monitor and treat at-risk populations, and expand population health programs.

Elevating Telehealth in Maryland and Other States

The MHCC views telehealth as an important strategy to improve access to care and reduce health care costs. The expansion of telehealth in a variety of health care settings is one of MHCC's five strategic priorities (2019-2022). Educating providers and patients about the value of telehealth and evaluating the design and implementation of telehealth programs help foster peer learning of telehealth throughout the State. *Click here for more information about MHCC strategic priorities.*

As interest in telehealth grows, states are deciding how telehealth should be defined and regulated. The American Telemedicine Association's, *2019 State of the States Report: Coverage and Reimbursement*, provides information on state telehealth laws. The majority of state Medicaid programs, including Maryland, provide coverage and reimbursement for telehealth the same as in-person services. Common telehealth provider types include: physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, licensed mental health professional, occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychologist, and dentist. *Click here for more information and how to access the report.*

MHCC Telehealth Grants

Since 2014, MHCC has awarded 16 telehealth grants to qualified health care organizations operating in Maryland. These grants fund the implementation and evaluation of innovative telehealth projects across various settings. Lessons learned inform future applications of telehealth, better practices and implementation efforts, and policy development. Findings support planning to design and scale telehealth programs to larger or different patient populations.

A *Telehealth Grants Summary Table* lists the names of MHCC telehealth grantees and provides information about their projects. *For more information, please visit MHCC's Telehealth Grants web page.*

Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool

The MHCC compiled key takeaways from MHCC telehealth grants and discussions with industry leaders regarding factors that impact telehealth adoption and sustainability. A need was identified to help practices better understand barriers, facilitators, and patient and environmental factors associated with telehealth. A *Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool* (TRA tool) was developed to assist small practices preparing to implement or scale telehealth services. The TRA tool consists of five key domains: 1) Core Readiness; 2) Financial Considerations; 3) Operations; 4) Staff Engagement; and 5) Patient Readiness. The tool also includes a scoring sheet, supporting guidance, and additional resources. *Click **here** for more information about the tool and how to conduct an assessment.*

Webinars On-Demand

Telehealth webinars support peer learning about the current landscape of telehealth and how it can be used as an alternative mechanism to deliver quality health care services. The MHCC in collaboration with industry leaders locally and nationally present on a variety of telehealth topics, such as telehealth compliance and reimbursement, consumer engagement, and school-based telehealth. Webinars are available on-demand and feature presentations by telehealth adopters and subject matter experts. *Click **here** to view MHCC webinars on-demand.*

Considerations for Health Care Providers

Telehealth takes many forms from virtual consultations between a patient and health care provider in a clinical, home, or school setting to storing and transmitting biometric data from electronic wearables. There are various considerations associated with implementing or scaling a telehealth program. *Click **here** for more information on telehealth as it relates to legal, technical, financial, and operational matters.*

School-Based Telehealth Workgroup

In March 2018, the Senate Finance Committee (Committee) expressed a need to assess policies in the State governing school-based telehealth. The Committee tasked MHCC with convening a stakeholder workgroup to identify deficiencies in existing policies that limit diffusion of telehealth in schools, and develop recommendations – statutory, regulatory, or technical – to inform policy development. The MHCC submitted an interim report in January 2019 and a final report in October 2019. The recommendations are intended to serve a starting point to foster substantive policy changes that enable telehealth to be integrated into the standard of care in Maryland schools. *For more information, visit the School-Based Telehealth Workgroup web page.*

Other Resources

MHCC Information Brief: Office-Based Physicians Adoption of Telehealth (2018)

Highlights findings from an MHCC environmental scan of office-based physicians in Maryland, including adoption by specialty and region and well as current trends and adoption barriers.

Telehealth Reimbursement

Outlines Maryland and federal regulations governing telehealth reimbursement, including requirements for private payors, Maryland Medicaid, and Medicare.

Maryland Medicaid

Information, including frequently asked questions about the Maryland Medicaid Telehealth Program.

Telehealth Professional Liability Insurance

Overviews liability coverage and considerations for health care providers practicing medicine using technology to deliver care at a distance.

HIPAA and Telehealth

Guidance for ensuring telehealth practices are compliant with federal and state regulations.

Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center

One of 14 national Telehealth Resource Centers providing technical assistance and other resources to advance telehealth, particularly in rural and medically underserved communities.

Maryland Telehealth Alliance, Inc.

An all-volunteer collaborative that serves as a central knowledge base for telehealth in Maryland.

Contact

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