

# Provider Communication Alert

## For Internal Use Only

**To:** Provider Service and Provider Relations

**From:** Strategic Provider Communications

**Re:** CareFirst Implements the Maryland Preserve Telehealth Access Act

**Date:** July 1, 2021

## CareFirst Implements the Maryland Preserve Telehealth Access Act

### Background

The Maryland legislature passed the Maryland Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2021, which is effective July 1, 2021.

### Current Situation

The Act expands the definition of telehealth to include appropriate audio-only calls, which result in the appropriate delivery of a billable, covered health care service.

The mandate expands telehealth coverage to all professional provider types, but not all procedures.

Starting July 1, if a provider offers audio-only calls they will be paid for appropriate audio-only calls at the same rate as an in-person office visit, where applicable. This mandate expires June 30, 2023 and is applicable to patients enrolled in a fully insured Maryland benefit plan.

### Claims and Billing Information

Refer to the chart below for additional details. Providers should check their patient's benefits to confirm their plan includes appropriate audio-only telehealth calls.

Coverage type	Codes/Payment	Specialties Covered
MD fully insured	Appropriate E&M codes paid at in-person rates. Follow guidance <a href="#">online</a> for appropriate place of service and modifiers and add CPT® code 99056.	All specialties
DC fully insured	6 codes paid at \$20 99441, 99442, 99443, 98966, 98967 or 98968	All specialties

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Coverage type	Codes/Payment	Specialties Covered
VA fully insured	6 codes paid at \$20 99441, 99442, 99443, 98966, 98967 or 98968	Limited specialties: primary care providers, internal medicine, OB/GYN, family practice, and pediatrics
MD, DC and VA non-risk (self-insured ASO)	6 codes paid at \$20 99441, 99442, 99443, 98966, 98967 or 98968	Limited specialties: primary care providers, internal medicine, OB/GYN, family practice, and pediatrics

**For Dental Providers:** Dental providers should use D0190 with D9995 for audio-only dental telehealth visits. Audio-only teledentistry visits are covered when the patient is unable to participate in an audio-visual, synchronous visit in lieu of presenting in person to the office.

**Additional Resources**

A [list](#) of acceptable telehealth procedure codes/modifiers is available on our Coronavirus Resource Center. Click on [Telemedicine](#) under the Healthcare Providers tab. This list also contains codes that are inappropriate for audio-only calls.

To determine if a member is in a Maryland fully insured benefit plan, providers should refer to the attached [CareFirst Direct User Guide](#) or call Customer Service.

**Additional Information**

We have also updated our [Medical](#) and [Dental](#) Provider Manuals to reflect this change. You can find this information in the following chapters

- Medical Manual
  - [Chapter 2](#)
  - [Chapter 9](#)
- Dental Manual
  - [Chapter 7](#)

More information is forthcoming regarding the timing of claims.

For questions, contact Hawi Itana at [hawi.itana@carefirst.com](mailto:hawi.itana@carefirst.com).