

05/06/2022

Hello REDC Members,

Here is this week's policy update.

REDC Virtual Advocacy Day

- Date: Wednesday, June 22 from 9am to 4pm EDT
- Where: Virtual, through Zoom
- Register here: [REDC Consortium Advocacy Day Registration](#)
 - Registration closes Monday, May 30.
- This advocacy day, you will meet with Congressional staff to discuss:
 - Maintaining telehealth flexibilities that have been expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Ensuring telehealth as a service modality for MH/SUD is at parity with telehealth offerings for medical/surgical services.

White House Proclamation on National Mental Health Awareness Month

- President Biden signed a proclamation recognizing the month of May as National Mental Health Awareness month.
- We were very excited to see the mention of eating disorders in second paragraph!
- You can view the proclamation [here](#).

Telehealth

Final Rule Published: Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters 2023

- The Administration released the final rule outlining changes to ACA plans for the upcoming plan year.
- As you may recall, the REDC and several member organizations submitted comments regarding this rule in January of this year.
 - Our team will be reviewing the final rule to see what recommendations we made were ultimately accepted early next week.
 - For those interested in getting into the weeds, the 180+ page final rule can be found [here](#).

Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Seeks to Make Telehealth Prescribing Waiver Permanent

- The DEA confirmed it is working to turn a temporary waiver that has allowed telehealth prescribing of controlled substances during the pandemic into a permanent one.
 - The agency is working on the regulatory side to make these changes.

- The Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act passed in 2008 amended the Controlled Substances Act with provisions intended to prevent the distribution of illegal drugs via the internet.
 - Provisions included making it illegal for physicians to prescribe controlled substances for patients over the internet without first evaluating them in person.
 - During the pandemic, this rule has been suspended to allow for greater flexibility in telehealth.
- The REDC has supported this effort and signed onto letters urging permanency.

Study Finds Telehealth Didn't Lead to Over-Utilization in 2020

- According to a study released in [JAMA Network Open](#) examining 40.7M commercially insured adults with acute clinical condition, patients treated for most acute condition via telehealth were as likely or slightly more likely to need a follow-up visit as those who sought in-person care from the start.
- Telehealth patients with chronic condition were less likely to need follow-up care.
- These findings are very promising given telehealth skeptics have argued that expanding the availability of telehealth would lead to an over-utilization of care.

House Companion Bill of the Telehealth Expansion and Evaluation Act Introduced

- The House counterpart to Sens. Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Young (R-IN) bill that would extend telehealth flexibilities afforded under CMS for 2-years post-pandemic has been introduced in the House.
- The bill is led by Reps. Axne (D-IA) and Hudson (R-NC) and is numbered [H.R. 7573](#).

Alliance for Connected Care State Telehealth Tracker & Manatt Health Tracker

- For updates on the status of telehealth expansion at the state level, please refer to the organization's state resource guide [here](#).
- Additionally, Manatt has put together a tracker that has been updated as recently as April 22. You can view this one [here](#).

Letters of Support

- The REDC signed onto a letter led by the American Academy of Pediatrics to support funding for the Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program for Fiscal Year 2023.
- The full letter is attached for reference.

Have a great weekend!

Center Road Solutions Team