

07/08/2022

Hello REDC Members,

Here is this week's policy update.

REMINDER: Register for REDC Congressional Briefing

"Supporting Mental Health Care Virtually: How Telehealth and Parity Compliance Narrow Gaps in Access to Care."

- **When:** Wednesday, July 13th from 12-1pm EDT
- **Where:** Zoom Webinar
- **RSVP:** [Register Here](#)
- **Purpose:**
 - The Congressional briefing will explore how telehealth and federal parity protections continue to close gaps in access to mental health services.
 - Expert speakers will discuss how telehealth is utilized in a variety of settings across the country and how Congress can continue to advance access to these critical services.
- **Speakers:**
 - Jillian Lampert, PhD, RD, MPH, Board President, REDC; Moderator
 - Kelly Vaillancourt-Strobach, PhD, Director of Policy & Advocacy, National Association of School Psychologists
 - Juhie Parnami, MPH, Chief Telehealth Officer, Eating Recovery Center
 - David Lloyd, MBA, Senior Policy Advisor, Kennedy Forum
 - Faith Carlson, MA, LPC-MH, IAEDP Member, CEDS Candidate, Eating Disorders Coalition Ambassador.

Telehealth

Telehealth Model Legislation

- Multiple organizations have drafted different model bills and guidelines to address out-of-state licensure and coverage and payment of telehealth services.
- Manatt outlined the various approaches of the model telehealth bills and guidelines issued by the American Medical Association, Uniform Law Commission, and Federation of State Medical Boards that states can consider when refining their post-pandemic telehealth laws, policies and regulations.
- You can view the article [here](#).

Benefit Expansion for Workers Act ([H.R. 7353](#))

- The legislation would allow employers to provide telehealth or other remote care services to employees ineligible for an employer-sponsored group health plan.
- The treatment of telehealth services as an excepted benefit is temporary and will expire once the COVID-19 PHE ends. Passage of the legislation is needed to provide certainty and ensure expanded, long-term access to these services.

CMS Releases Preliminary Medicaid and CHIP Data

- The agency released an [update](#) to the Medicaid and CHIP COVID-19 data snapshot, which includes data through January 2022.
- The preliminary data suggests that during the PHE, services delivered via telehealth per 100,000 beneficiaries were highest among adults ages 19 to 64, while children under age 19 and adults age 65 and older had lower, comparable rates.
- The data also shows behavioral health services delivered via telehealth increased dramatically during the PHE.

CMS Releases Proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule

- The rule outlines a proposal to create an exception to supervision requirements, allowing marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors, addiction counselors, certified peer recovery specialists, and others to provide behavioral health services while being under general supervision rather than “direct” supervision.
 - This would mean these providers could provide services without a doctor or NP physically on site, expanding access to behavioral health services in additional communities.
- The press release on the proposed rule can be found [here](#).

Telehealth Lobbyists Steer Clear of Abortion

- Lobbyists pushing lawmakers to extend pandemic-related rules are staying out of abortion politics.
- Advocates fear that because Roe v. Wade is overturned, the divisive issue could find a way into telehealth negotiations.
- Although abortion services represent a small percentage of overall telehealth services, consultants and lobbyists are concerned that digital providers could be pulled into legal battles as patients in states where the procedure is now illegal seek other ways to access it.

Have a great weekend!

Center Road Solutions Team