

TELEHEALTH

Meeting the Mental Health Needs of our Patients

AMERICAN
PSYCHIATRIC
ASSOCIATION

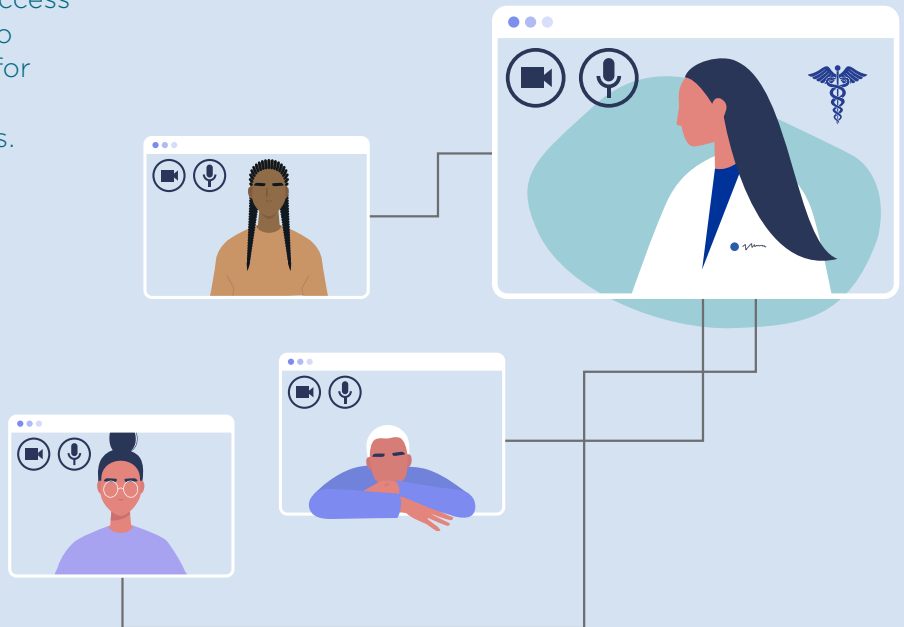


OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Telehealth Expansion During the Pandemic

Many states took action to expand access to telehealth during the pandemic, so that doctors could continue to care for their existing patients and treat new patients in underserved communities.

Permanent insurance coverage of telehealth will ensure patients continue to receive clinically safe and efficient care.



Our Current Mental Health Crisis

- Nearly one in five Americans reports having a mental illness, and it's gotten worse in the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In fact, social distancing policies have led to isolation and unemployment.
- Our medical workforce's mental health is under heavy strain.
- Communities of color have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and are already less likely to receive the care they need.

Continuing access to psychiatric care through telehealth post-COVID-19 will save lives.



Benefits of Telehealth

Under telehealth, psychiatrists report lower “no-show” rates. Patients save time and money since they do not have to travel to a doctor’s office. This will result in long-term savings.

For patients who lack video technology, accessing treatment over the phone has ensured continuity of care. Patients who are hesitant to see a physician face-to-face feel more comfortable seeking care via telemedicine.

Making telehealth permanently available will help reach patients where they are.



What You Can to Expand Access to Telehealth?

Support Legislation That:

- Requires private insurers to cover telehealth and reimburse at the same rate as in-person services.
- Requires coverage of audio-only services in certain circumstances.
- Updates definitions to incorporate recent technological advances.
- Prohibits stricter forms of utilization review for telehealth.
- Prohibits insurers from requiring that a particular telehealth vendor or technology platform be used.
- Prohibits restrictions on prescribing through telehealth that are stricter than what is allowed under state and federal law.



Sources

- Kaiser Family Foundation: [Opportunities and Barriers for Telemedicine in the U.S. During the COVID-19 Emergency and Beyond](#)
- Kaiser Family Foundation: [The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use](#)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (2019). [2017-2018 NSDUH State Estimates of Substance Use and Mental Disorders](#).