



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor - Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 23, 2017

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton
Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair
House Health and Government Operations Committee
241 House Office Bldg.
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 570/HB 658— Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Telehealth - Requirements

Dear Chair Middleton and Chair Pendergrass:

Thank you for your March 20, 2017 letter regarding Senate Bill 570 and House Bill 658 of 2017. You requested that the Department (1) implement its plan to cover certain remote patient monitoring (RPM) services, (2) consider expanding the types of health care providers who may be reimbursed at distant sites, (3) consider the recommendations of the Workgroup on Rural Health Care Delivery, and (4) provide a timeline for planned expansions to the Medicaid Telehealth program and submit a progress report to the committees by December 1, 2017.

The Department is dedicated to implementing a telehealth policy that best serves the needs of Maryland residents enrolled in the Medicaid program. Since 2010, the Department has implemented a series of significant program expansions. At its inception, the Medicaid Telehealth Program served recipients located in designated rural counties. Today, the Telehealth Program provides statewide coverage of live video conferencing to Medicaid recipients seeking services from a broad range of providers. Further expansions are currently underway, based on findings detailed in the Department's recent report submitted pursuant to SB 242/HB 886 (Ch. 366/367 of the Acts of 2016).

With respect to the first request, the Department is moving forward with efforts to expand the Telehealth Program to include payment for RPM services. Effective January 1, 2018, the Program will cover RPM services for individuals who (1) have been diagnosed with at least one of the following chronic conditions—diabetes, congestive heart failure, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD); (2) have had two or more hospitalizations in the previous year for one of the chronic conditions listed above; and (3) are capable of using the provided equipment and transmitting the necessary data or has an able and willing person to assist them. The Department will

take the request to expand the qualifying criteria to include individuals who visited an emergency room without a hospital admission into consideration as we move forward.

Regarding the second request, the Department is currently drafting regulations to expand coverage to include services offered by community-based substance use disorder (SUD) programs. More specifically, Opioid Treatment Providers (OTPs, provider type 32) and BHA-certified programs (provider type 50) will be permitted to serve as distant site providers. As such, licensed clinical professional counselors billing through one of these provider types will be eligible for reimbursement of telehealth services.

Third, the Department is working closely with the Workgroup on Rural Health Care Delivery to ensure they have the Medicaid data they need to inform their report. We look forward to reviewing the Workgroup's findings when their report is submitted on October 1, 2017.

Finally, as noted above, the Department is implementing the program expansions identified in its report. The Department anticipates that the new regulations expanding eligible distant sites will take effect no later than October 1, 2017. The Telehealth Program will include coverage for RPM effective January 1, 2018. The Department commits to providing a progress report to the committees by December 1, 2017. Due to the timing of these expansions, it may not be possible to fully assess their impact at that time.

Thank you for your consideration of this information. We look forward to continuing to work closely with legislators and stakeholders to ensure that access to telehealth services for Marylanders continues to grow. If you have questions or need more information about this subject, please contact Webster Ye, Director of Governmental Affairs, at (410) 260-3190 or at webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary

cc: Senate Finance Committee
House Health and Government Operations Committee