

TELEHEALTH: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEDICALLY NECESSARY CARE AND NO CARE AT ALL

Maryland took great strides to enhance access to telehealth services with the Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2021. However, the Act calls for provisions for audio-only coverage and reimbursement parity to sunset. If these provisions are not made permanent in 2023, care provided via telehealth could be reimbursed less than in-person services, and access to clinically appropriate services delivered over the phone could be denied. Without action, access to services that Marylanders have come to depend on would be jeopardized.

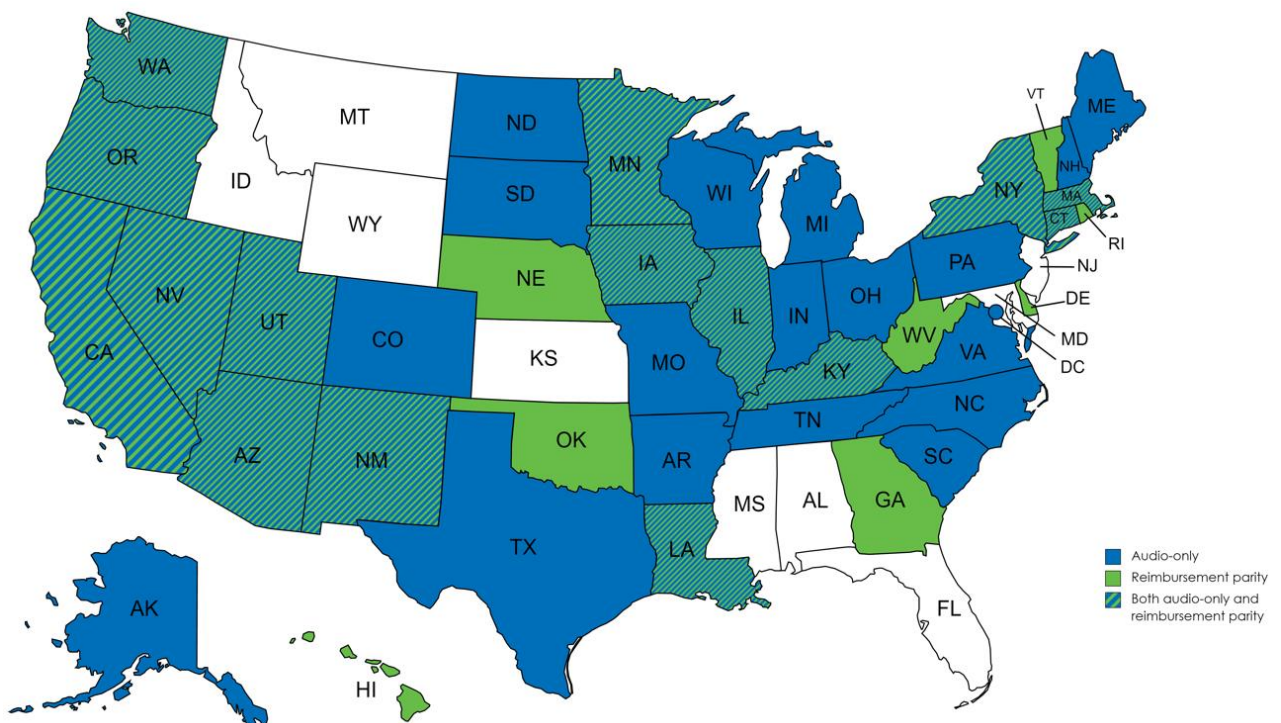
MARYLANDERS DESERVE THE FULL RANGE OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Audio-only access is a matter of equity. Lacking smart devices or affordable broadband, many Marylanders rely on phone lines to communicate. One-third of Maryland households without internet earn less than \$20,000, and communities of color are disproportionately represented.

Eliminating reimbursement parity is a step backward. Studies have shown the quality of care is the same regardless of the modality. Paying less for telehealth will cut telehealth availability. People hurt the most will be those who don't have easy access to transportation to get to appointments.

34 states allow for audio-only telehealth coverage

23 states have private payer reimbursement parity for telehealth services



HOW YOU CAN HELP

The General Assembly will consider these provisions during the 2023 Legislative Session. MHA is building a wide coalition to advocate for audio-only coverage and reimbursement parity to be made permanent. Contact Erin Dorrien (edorrien@mhaonline.org) for more information on how to join this effort.