

Issue Brief: Telehealth and COVID-19 State of Emergency

Guidance for healthcare providers related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is changing rapidly. Telehealth-related news, information, policy updates, tools, and resources are being provided by the American Telehealth Association related to COVID-19; please see the following:

<https://info.americantelemed.org/covid-19-news-resources>.

Updated (2019) state-specific information is provided in the report found at the following link:

<https://www.americantelemed.org/initiatives/2019-state-of-the-states-report-coverage-and-reimbursement/>. Additional information on telehealth is provided at

<https://www.americantelemed.org/resource/why-telemedicine/>.

Risk reduction considerations for all professionals who use telehealth services:

- Practice within the scope of practice and associated guidelines for your profession
- Follow all rules, definitions, and directives of your state licensing or regulatory board, including interpretations
- Maintain compliance with all HIPAA standards
- You must be licensed to practice in the state where the PATIENT or CLIENT is located unless you live in one of 29 states that have adopted the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC).
 - Nurses who hold a multi-state license from an eNLC member state can practice in all eNLC states, including telehealth practice. More information can be found at <https://www.ncsbn.org/11945.htm>.
- It is preferable to use telemedicine technologies that are integrated into your patient record system if possible
- Understand any factors that have impacted previously scheduled remote visits such as school-based therapy programs
- Be sure that your professional malpractice insurance provides coverage for telehealth services
- If you are providing telemedicine services for an agency for whom you are not employed, be clear about accountabilities and a formal agreement should be executed
- Pay attention to EMERGENCY AND DISASTER DIRECTIVES at the state and federal level that could impact use of telemedicine and payment for services.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES related to TELEHEALTH SERVICES

For Nurses

The American Nurses Association 2017 research and many links can be found at <http://ojin.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Vol-22-2017/No2-May-2017/Nurses-Advancing-Telehealth-Services.html>

American Academy of Telehealth Nursing. <https://www.aaacn.org/practice-resources/telehealth>

Nurses who hold a multi-state license from an eNLC member state can practice in all eNLC states, including telehealth practice. More information can be found at <https://www.ncsbn.org/11945.htm>

For Nurse Practitioners

For state-by-state practice information, utilize the following link from the American Association of Nurse Practitioners <https://www.aanp.org/practice/practice-information-by-state>

Rutledge, CM et al. (2017). Telehealth and eHealth in nurse practitioner training: current perspectives. *Adv Med Educ Pract.* 2017; 8: 399–409. doi: 10.2147/AMEP.S116071
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5498674/>

Melanie Balestra, JD, PNP. (2018). Telehealth and Legal Implications for Nurse Practitioners. *The Journal for Nurse Practitioners.* January 2018. Volume 14, Issue 1, Pages 33–39.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nurpra.2017.10.003> OR
[https://www.npjournal.org/article/S1555-4155\(17\)30808-5/pdf](https://www.npjournal.org/article/S1555-4155(17)30808-5/pdf)

For Social Workers

Association of Social Work Boards 2017. Regulations impacting social work electronic practice. <https://members.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Regulations-for-social-work-electronic-practice-11.14.17.pdf>

For Counselors

Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology <https://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/telepsychology>

Telehealth mental health services across state lines. <https://www.zurinstitute.com/telehealth-across-state-lines/>

Summary of state rules and regulations <https://telementalhealthtraining.com/states-rules-and-regulations>

For Occupational Therapists

Bierman, R.T. et. al. State Occupational and Physical Therapy Telehealth Laws and Regulations: A 50-State Survey. Int J Telerehabil. 2018 Fall; 10(2): 3–54. doi: 10.5195/ijt.2018.6269
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6296796/>

The American Occupational Therapy Association - Telehealth Resources
<https://www.aota.org/Practice/Manage/telehealth.aspx>

For Physical Therapists

Bierman, R.T. et. al. State Occupational and Physical Therapy Telehealth Laws and Regulations: A 50-State Survey. Int J Telerehabil. 2018 Fall; 10(2): 3–54. doi: 10.5195/ijt.2018.6269
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6296796/>

The American Physical Therapy Association – Telehealth <https://www.apta.org/telehealth/>

For Speech Therapists

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
<https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Telepractice/> or
<https://www.asha.org/prpprinttemplate.aspx?folderid=8589934956>

For Dietitians

Commission on Dietetic Registration: Telehealth <https://www.cdrnet.org/telehealth>