

MedStar Family Choice Maryland HealthChoice Temporary Expansion of Medicaid Benefits for Telehealth

In response to the state of emergency, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has recently issued several memos related to the **temporary** expansion of virtual and audio-only telehealth services so that health care providers are able to deliver health care services at sites other than the sites at which patients are located.

MedStar Family Choice is following the guidance issued by MDH. Below we outline our policy related to virtual and audio-only telehealth services. Providers are expected to follow the provisions outlined in the attached MDH memos:

- <https://bit.ly/3do4dbA>
- <https://bit.ly/3bpfC9d>

As outlined in the MDH memos, providers should make every effort to use the technology in the order of priority described by MDH:

1. *Traditional telehealth technology which meets all formal requirements is strongly preferred.*
2. *If Medicaid participants are unable to access originating sites possessing fully qualified technology (ability to pan/focus camera, multiple views, etc.) this emergency policy will permit the use of notebook computers, smartphones, or audio-only phones.*
3. *If Medicaid participants cannot access cell-phone based video technology, audio-only telephone calls will be permitted.*

Providers using telehealth technology (virtual/visual or audio-only) for patients who are in the home or not located with the provider are permitted to bill when the following conditions are met:

1. Providers must obtain explicit consent of the participant and must clearly explain the confidentiality limitations, including the use of non-HIPAA compliant technology. This must be clearly documented in the medical record.
2. Providers may only deliver services that fall within their normal scope of practice as authorized by the relevant professional board.
3. Providers must maintain documentation in the same manner as for an in-person visit.
4. Services that require in-person evaluation or cannot be reasonably delivered via virtual/video or audio-only communication are not eligible for this type of reimbursement.
5. When billing for virtual/visual telehealth, services must be provided through a two-way audio-visual technology.

Billing

Virtual/Visual telehealth services

The “-GT” modifier must be used to identify the claim as a virtual/visual telehealth delivered service. Providers should bill using the location of the provider. For example, providers rendering service from their office should bill using place of service 11. Please note POS 2 (Telehealth) is not accepted by MDH and should not be billed.

Audio-Only

MedStar Family Choice will only accept the following CPT codes:

- 99211
- 99212
- 99213

The “-UB” modifier must be used to identify the claim as an audio-only telephonically delivered service. Providers should bill using the location of the provider. For example, providers rendering service from their office should bill using place of service 11. Please note POS 2 (Telehealth) is not accepted by MDH and should not be billed.

We understand that this guidance may be different from how Medicare or many commercial payors are asking to be billed for telehealth services; however, MFC is following the Medicaid billing guidelines provided by MDH.

Prior-Authorization Requirements

At this time, the MFC prior-authorization requirements have not changed. Please refer to the MFC pre-authorization list: <https://bit.ly/2JaOYVC>, which can be found on our MedStar Family Choice website (MedStarFamilyChoice.com).

MedStar Family Choice will reimburse for the telehealth services outlined above until such time that MDH removes the expansion of these telehealth benefits.

MedStar Family Choice will continue to closely monitor all communications from MDH. We will communicate with our provider community as quickly as possible to any changes that may impact what has been outlined in this provider alert. If you have any questions, please call **800-905-1722, option 5.**

You may also email us questions at MFC-ProviderRelations2@medstar.net