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CONTACT: Gina Cella
gcella@americantelemed.org
t: 781-799-3137

MAJOR VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR TELEHEALTH WITH PRESIDENT BIDEN SIGNING OMNIBUS INTO LAW WITH TWO-YEAR EXTENSIONS FOR VIRTUAL CARE PROVISIONS

ATA and ATA ACTION Applaud Congress and the Administration, Renew Commitment to Seeking Permanency for Telehealth Services

WASHINGTON, DC, JANUARY 3, 2023 – The [American Telemedicine Association](#) (ATA) and [ATA Action](#) issued the following statement, following the official two-year extension for telehealth provisions included in the omnibus bill ratified into law by President Biden on December 29.

“We can think of no greater vote of confidence for telehealth, nor greater reassurance to our beleaguered healthcare providers and the American people, than to have the unwavering bicameral, bipartisan support of Congress and the administration, confirming continued access to virtual care services through 2024,” said Kyle Zebley, the ATA’s senior vice president, public policy, and executive director, ATA Action. “There is little doubt of the value of telehealth. Our work will now renew in earnest to determine the best path forward for integrating virtual care into an omnichannel healthcare system that includes both in-person and virtual care delivery for the future.”

Highlights from the new omnibus bill, which take effect immediately, include:

Medicare provisions extended until the end of 2024:

- Expanding originating and geographic site to include anywhere the patient is located, including the patient’s home;
- Expanding eligible practitioners qualified to furnish telehealth services, including occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists and audiologists;
- Extending the ability for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and rural health clinics (RHCs) to furnish telehealth services;
- Delaying the in-person requirement for mental health services furnished through telehealth, including the in-person requirements for FQHCs and RHCs;
- Extending coverage and payment for audio-only telehealth services;
- Extending the Acute Hospital Care at Home (AHCAH) initiative; and requiring the HHS Secretary to publish a report comparing AHCAH programs with traditional inpatient care delivery; and;
- Extending the ability to use telehealth services to meet the face-to-face recertification requirement for hospice care.

Tax Provisions extended until the end of 2024:

- Extending high deductible health plan (HDHP) safe harbor exceptions for telehealth services in high-deductible health plans.

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“This is as close to a best-case scenario as we could have thought possible at this moment, and we are grateful to our Congressional champions and the administration for their steadfast support. However, we had hoped that the Ryan Haight in-person waiver for the remote prescription of clinically appropriate controlled substances would have also been included. We are encouraged that Congress did include language in the omnibus directing the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to finalize the special registration process and will continue to work to find a way forward on this issue in 2023.”

About ATA Action

[ATA Action](#) recognizes that telehealth and virtual care have the potential to transform the healthcare delivery system by improving patient outcomes, enhancing the safety and effectiveness of care, addressing health disparities, and reducing costs. ATA Action is a registered 501c6 company and an affiliated trade organization of the ATA.

About the ATA

As the only organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, the [American Telemedicine Association](#) is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and appropriate care when and where they need it, enabling the system to do more good for more people. The ATA represents a broad and inclusive member network of leading healthcare delivery systems, academic institutions, technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide education and resources to help integrate virtual care into emerging value-based delivery models.

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