

## March 18, 2022: Advocacy Update spotlight on telehealth flexibilities

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### Telehealth flexibilities assured for the bulk of 2022

Patients and physicians who have come to see the immense clinical value of telehealth throughout the COVID-19 pandemic can breathe a sigh of relief that access to this useful mode of care will continue for at least another five months after the Biden administration declares an end to the nation's public health emergency (PHE).

The provision is one of many related to health care included in the massive, \$1.5 trillion spending bill—called the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022—that was passed last week and garnered headlines for including \$13.6 billion in emergency aid for Ukraine.

“Congress has taken a crucial step in starting a revolution in patient access. The AMA aims to continue being a partner in moving it forward,” said AMA President Gerald E. Harmon, MD. “The dramatic increase in adoption of telehealth that occurred in 2020 has allowed medical care that combines in-person and virtual services to become the new standard of care. This new legislation guarantees that patients with Medicare will continue to benefit from this important innovation in health care delivery.”

The AMA and a vast array of more than 300 health care organizations urged congressional leaders (PDF) to take this step as a way of “facilitating a pathway to comprehensive permanent telehealth reform that would provide certainty to beneficiaries and our nation's health care providers while providing sufficient time for Congress and the administration to analyze the impact of telehealth and patient care.”

Read the full article by Kevin B. O'Reilly, AMA news editor, for more details.

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