

# Huge House win puts telehealth extension in Senate's hands

AUG 3, 2022

**Kevin B. O'Reilly**

News Editor

---

**What's the news:** The House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly for a bipartisan bill that extends Medicare telehealth payment and regulatory flexibilities through the end of 2024. The House's 416–12 vote last week is a manifestation of the massive support among lawmakers, patients and physicians to build on the gains of telehealth seen during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure it continues to be an accessible mode of care for the long haul.

Supporting telehealth is an essential component of the AMA Recovery Plan for America's Physicians. You took care of the nation. It's time for the nation to take care of you. It's time to rebuild. And the AMA is ready.

Telehealth is critical to the future of health care, which is why the AMA continues to lead the charge to aggressively expand telehealth policy, research and resources to ensure physician practice sustainability and fair payment.

**Why it's important:** "The COVID-19 public health emergency made plain that care via telehealth should be available to all Medicare patients, especially with their own physicians, regardless of where they live or how they access these services," AMA President Jack Resneck Jr., MD, said in reaction to the vote. "From continuity of care, broadened access to care and removing geographic and originating-site restrictions, our hope is that the flexibilities afforded during the public health emergency will be made permanent."

The AMA urges "the Senate to act on this bipartisan bill, and for the Congress to build on this success," added Dr. Resneck.

Read about the AMA survey data that shows physicians' steadfast commitment to telehealth.

**Learn more:** Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra renewed the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) declaration, effective July 15. The PHE will remain in effect for at least another 90 days. As a result, Medicare flexibilities and waivers related to telehealth and more will remain in place through at least Oct. 13, 2022.

As a result of AMA advocacy, the Medicare telehealth flexibilities will be in effect for five months after the PHE ends, and the AMA continues to strongly advocate for these flexibilities to be made permanent. Secretary Becerra recommitted to providing no less than 60 days' notice prior to the termination of the COVID-19 PHE.

Find out how the AMA's advocacy continues to make it easier for physicians to expand care to their patients via telehealth and receive fair and equitable compensation for their services.

The AMA also is continuing to develop the resources physicians need to quickly implement and optimize telehealth programs and continue care.

AMA research also spurs solutions that keep physician and patient needs at the forefront of telehealth delivery.

?

53

Save