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COVID-19 UPDATE AND TELEHEALTH

COVID-19 and Physical Therapy Practice

E-visit FAQ - <http://www.apta.org/PTinMotion/News/2020/03/18/E-VisitFAQs/>

Per APTA: "Although APTA staff stated a telephone could be used during the March 20 Facebook Live event to conduct an e-visit under Medicare, we have received conflicting information from the MACs as it relates to the requirement of an online portal for an e-visit. We advise members to confirm the requirements with their MAC(s). We are continuing to work with CMS to get definitive guidance. We apologize for the confusion."

Webinar on E-visits Recorded by APTA Staff to Include Slides
- <http://www.apta.org/Webinar/20/3/MedicareTelehealth/>

Telehealth Resources on the APTA Website - <https://www.apta.org/telehealth/>

News and Updates

March 20, 2020, Update: APTA has developed a template letter to use in advocating to the governor, state representatives and the Medicaid office director - for coverage by private payers and Medicaid of telehealth furnished by PTs and PTAs to ensure that patients continue to have access to the rehabilitative care they need amid the COVID-19 pandemic. [For individual PTs and PTAs.](#)

March 17, 2020, Update: APTA has developed a [template letter for you to use in advocating to your payers](#) - private, Medicare Advantage, and Medicaid (both fee for service and MCOs) - for coverage of telehealth furnished by PTs and PTAs to ensure that patients continue to have access to the rehabilitative care they need amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Instructions are included at the top of the letter.

March 16, 2020, Update: [Telehealth in Physical Therapy In Light of COVID-19](#)

The use of telehealth is one approach that can help keep both patients and providers safe, but PTs and PTAs need to understand the current regulatory and payer telehealth landscape to decide whether telehealth is right - or even a possibility - for them.

Recommendations for Determining Potential for Physical Therapists to Provide services via Telehealth

From: Alicemae Bell, PT, DPT

There is currently a great deal of confusion around the coverage of telehealth when provided by physical therapists. Some broad policies and federal and state legislation may be interpreted as including physical therapists even though this is not explicitly stated. Also, when members call a payer and ask if telehealth is covered the payer may respond yes not knowing that it is a physical therapist asking the question or what codes the physical therapist intends to bill. To that end we are providing guidance on how to pose the question and/or how to interpret communications from federal and state agencies as well as payers.

For example, Anthem has advised APTA that there has been no change in policy related to

physical therapists and telehealth at this point in time. One of our members shared the following information.

"This is what Anthem Colorado just told CPTN (= Colorado Physical Therapy Network: 110 clinics):

"We will process claims in compliance with the member's benefit documents and our policies and procedures. Therefore, if the therapist feels that offering PT/OT/ST as telehealth services is within the scope of their license and in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, then appropriate, clean claims should be submitted for processing.

<https://www.anthem.com/ca/blog/member-news/how-to-protect/>
<https://providernews.anthem.com/colorado/article/information-from-anthem-for-care-providers-about-covid-19-1> "

This response has many caveats and conditions. Any references to scope of license and all state and federal laws relevant to telehealth would have to be reviewed before moving forward with providing and billing PT services via telehealth.

When posing the question to a payer or state agency we recommend that physical therapists be very specific and get the following information in writing.

***Will services provided by physical therapists be covered when provided via telehealth?
If so, what codes should be billed and what modifiers are required?
What device(s) or application(s) can be utilized?
What, if any, consents are required?
Are there any special documentation requirements?***

SPONSOR THE TOURNAMENT OF ROSES PARADE FLOAT

To celebrate #APTA100 and to raise public awareness for the physical therapy profession, CPTA is sponsoring a float in the 132nd Tournament of Roses Parade™ on January 1, 2021.

To date, our fundraising efforts have yielded over \$250,000, including a generous \$25,000 donation from APTA which was approved at their February meeting.

Can we [count on your donation](#) to help us celebrate 100 years of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) by educating consumers that PTs and PTAs help to optimize movement?

The Rose Parade is a well-known New Year's Day tradition AND a one-of-a-kind public outreach opportunity to educate and inform consumers what PTs and PTAs do. The 2021 Parade Theme, "Dream. Believe. Achieve" (Celebrating Education) could not be a more perfect concept to achieve this goal. We are also extremely excited to be able to highlight APTA's #ChoosePT and how the physical therapy profession helps to optimize movement. This event has an incredibly wide, global reach:

- Estimated live audience of 700,000 at the parade*
- 45.5 million viewers nationally via television*
- An additional international audience of 28 million viewers*
- Countless other individuals view the floats up close when they are on display to the public for two days following the parade

We are just shy of the \$300,000 needed, and we are confident we can [raise the remainder of funds for this amazing event with your support!](#)

When you see the float driving by on television, you can proudly tell your friends and family, "Hey! I helped build that!"

Kelley Kubota, PT, MS
Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist
Certified Brain Injury Specialist
Director, CPTA Chapter Board
Chair, CPTA Rose Parade Float Task Force
Member, APTA Centennial Steering Committee

Rick Katz, PT, DPT, MHA
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