

## Specialty Practice

### Knowledge and Skills for Telehealth Services



**Policy:** It is the policy of [Organization name here] to ensure that all staff possess the knowledge and skills needed to provide safe and quality health care services to qualified beneficiaries in a HIPAA-compliant environment.

**Purpose:** To explain the knowledge and skills needed for the provision of telehealth services, from a Medicare Rules and Regulations perspective.

**Scope:** This document is applicable for specialty practices, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Each organization should check their state regulations for further requirements and opportunities.

#### Temporary PHE Guidance\*

*“Medicare beneficiaries will be able to receive a specific set of services through telehealth including evaluation and management visits (common office visits), mental health counseling and preventive health screenings. This will help ensure Medicare beneficiaries, who are at a higher risk for COVID-19, are able to visit with their doctor from their home, without having to go to a doctor’s office or hospital which puts themselves and others at risk.”*

For further reading: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-telemedicine-health-care-provider-fact-sheet>

\*Temporary guidance related to Public Health Emergency (PHE)

**Procedures:**

**I. Knowledge and Skills of Telehealth Services and Practice.**

- A. Physicians and Practitioners must have the knowledge and skills to provide telehealth services.
  - 1. Physician and Practitioner knowledge of providing telehealth services must include:
    - a) Knowledge of federal and state telehealth rules and regulations of HIPAA and telehealth, as well as telehealth-specific documentation. **(Refer to Specialty Practice Distant Site, Documentation and Technology policies)**

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- b) Knowledge of patient telehealth education, to include explaining to the patient the purpose of usage of technology during the visit. **(Refer to Specialty Practice Consent, Distant Site and Technology policies)**
- c) Knowledge of data collection and evaluation of telehealth performance improvement initiatives.
- d) Knowledge of how to access IT support.

2. Physician and Practitioner skills for providing telehealth services must include:
  - a) The ability to understand and direct technology, to include video equipment and examination camera, computer/tablet/ Smartphone, microphone, and other peripherals as indicated/needed (i.e., electronic stethoscope, otoscope, etc.).

B. Nursing Personnel must have the knowledge and skills to provide telehealth services.

1. Nursing Personnel knowledge of providing telehealth services must include:
  - a) Knowledge of federal and state telehealth rules and regulations, HIPAA and telehealth, as well as telehealth-specific documentation. **(Link to Specialty Practice Distant Site, Technology and Documentation policies)**
  - b) Knowledge of setting-up the space for a telehealth visit, and how to check-in/check-out the patient. **(Link to Specialty Practice Distant Site policy)**
  - c) Knowledge of patient telehealth education, to include explaining to patient the purposed and usage of technology during the visit. **(Link to Specialty Practice Consent, Distant Site and Technology policies)**
  - d) Knowledge of data collection and evaluation of telehealth performance improvement initiatives.
  - e) Knowledge of how to access IT support.
2. Nursing Personnel skills for providing telehealth services must include:
  - a) The ability to access and operate technology, to include setting up video equipment and examination camera, microphone, and other peripherals as indicated/needed (i.e., electronic stethoscope, etc.).  
[https://www.gptrac.org/file\\_download/inline/a1531fee-c873-434b-975a-f544d21ac72a](https://www.gptrac.org/file_download/inline/a1531fee-c873-434b-975a-f544d21ac72a)

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C. Administrative Personnel must have the knowledge and skills to support telehealth services.

1. Administrative personnel knowledge of telehealth services must include:
  - a) Knowledge of HIPAA and telehealth services. **(Refer to Specialty Practice Technology policy)**
  - b) Knowledge of phone etiquette, scheduling appointments, and registering patients.
  - c) Knowledge of data collection for performance improvement.
  - d) Knowledge of how to access IT support.
2. Administrative personnel skills for the support of telehealth services must include:
  - a) The ability to use a computer, software, and the phone.

**Tips:**

- *Ensure the organization's clinical educator is familiar with telehealth-specific knowledge and skills.*
- *Telehealth-specific knowledge and skills should be integrated into the staff member's orientation and competency checklist and reviewed annually.*

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