



State of Wisconsin
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0551/P2
TJD:cjs

DOA:.....Ames, BB0028 - Telehealth definition

FOR 2019-2021 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; relating to: the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Definition of “telehealth”; reimbursement

This bill expands the definition of “telehealth” for the purposes of reimbursement of mental health services provided through telehealth under the Medical Assistance program. Currently, the definition of “telehealth” includes only real-time communications between individuals and health care providers. The bill includes in the definition real-time communications between providers and, in circumstances determined by DHS, asynchronous transmissions of digital images or data between providers, known as store-and-forward technology. The definition of “telehealth” currently and under the bill does not include telephone conversations or Internet-based communications between providers or between providers and individuals.

This bill requires DHS to establish, by rule, a method of reimbursement for providers of Medical Assistance services that are covered under the Medical Assistance program and are provided via a type of telehealth described in the bill. One of the telehealth types for which the bill requires reimbursement is when a service is a consultation between a provider at an originating site and a provider at a remote location using a combination of interactive video, audio, and externally

acquired images through a networking environment. The other telehealth method is store-and-forward either between providers or between a provider and a Medical Assistance recipient.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 49.45 (29w) (b) 1. b. of the statutes is amended to read:

49.45 (29w) (b) 1. b. “Telehealth” is means a service provided from a remote location using a combination of interactive video, audio, and externally acquired images through a networking environment between an individual or a provider at an originating site and a provider at a remote location with the service being of sufficient audio and visual fidelity and clarity as to be functionally equivalent to face-to-face contact; or, in circumstances determined by the department, an asynchronous transmission of digital clinical information through a secure electronic communications system from one provider to another provider. “Telehealth” does not include telephone conversations or Internet-based communications between providers or between providers and individuals.

SECTION 9119. Nonstatutory provisions; Health Services.

(1) MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH TELEHEALTH. The department of health services shall develop, by rule, a method of reimbursing providers under the Medical Assistance program for a service that is covered by the Medical Assistance program under subch. IV of ch. 49 and that satisfies any of the following:

(a) The service is a consultation between a provider at an originating site and a provider at a remote location using a combination of interactive video, audio, and externally acquired images through a networking environment.

(b) The service is an asynchronous transmission of digital clinical information through a secure electronic system from a Medical Assistance recipient or provider to a provider.

(END)