



**Subject:** Telehealth

**Revision Date:** 10/23

## **POLICY**

OSU Health Plan will provide reimbursement for Telemedicine and Telehealth services in which the healthcare professional and the patient are not at the same site. Examples include services delivered by internet through interactive audio/visual devices or other interactive communication platforms.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Telehealth/Telemedicine** Telehealth is the direct delivery of health care services to a patient (a) via synchronous (“at the same time”), interactive, real-time electronic communication comprising both audio and video elements or (b) activities that are asynchronous (“not at the same time”) and do not have both audio and video elements such as telephone calls, images transmitted via facsimile machine, and electronic mail. Telehealth/telemedicine will be referred to as telehealth in this document.

### **Interactive Audio and Video Telecommunication, Interactive Audio and Visual**

**Transmissions, Audio-Visual Communication Technology** Medical information is communicated in real-time with the use of interactive audio-only and/or audio-video communications equipment. The real-time communication is between the patient and a distant physician or health care specialist who is performing the service reported. The patient must be present and participating throughout the communication.

**Originating Site** The location of a patient at the time the service being furnished via a telecommunications system occurs.

**Distant Site** The location of a provider at the time the service being provided via a telecommunications system occurs. This location needs to be a HIPAA Compliant Clinically Appropriate Location. Examples include physician or practitioner offices, hospitals, critical access hospitals, rural health clinics, federally qualified health centers, and skilled nursing facilities.

**Eligible Providers** are listed under the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 4743.09 and include:

- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse as defined in section 4723.01 of the ORC
- Licensed Optometrist under ORC 4725
- Licensed Pharmacist under ORC 4729

Licensed Physician Assistant under ORC 4730  
Licensed Physician under ORC 4731  
Licensed Psychologist under ORC 4732  
Licensed Chiropractor under ORC 4734  
Licensed Audiologist or Speech-Language Pathologist under ORC 4753  
Licensed Occupational Therapist or Physical Therapist under ORC 4755  
Licensed Occupational Assistant or Physical Therapy Assistant under ORC 4755  
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Independent Social Worker, Independent Marriage and Family therapist under ORC 4757  
Licensed Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor under ORC 4758  
Licensed Dietician under ORC 4759  
Licensed Respiratory Care Professional under ORC 4761  
Licensed Genetic Counselor under ORC 4778  
Certified Ohio Behavior Analyst under ORC 4783

### **APPLICABILITY**

This policy is applicable to all licensed medical professionals in accordance with state laws regarding telemedicine. Each provider is subject to established standards of care for Telehealth under their respective licensing body.

### **POLICY GUIDELINES**

OSUHP will consider for reimbursement telehealth services which are recognized by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and appended with:

**POS 02:** Telehealth Provided Other than in Patient's Home – The location where health services and health related services are provided or received, through telecommunication technology. Patient is not located in their home when receiving health services or health related services through telecommunication technology.

**POS 10** (effective 1/1/2022): Telehealth Provided in Patient's Home – The location where health services and health related services are provided or received through telecommunication technology. Patient is located in their home (which is a location other than a hospital or other facility where the patient receives care in a private residence) when receiving health services or health related services through telecommunication technology.

### **and Modifiers:**

**93** Synchronous Telemedicine Service Rendered Via Telephone or Other Real-Time Interactive Audio-Only Telecommunications System

**95** Synchronous Telemedicine Service Rendered via a Real-time Interactive Audio and Video Telecommunications system.

For a current list of services payable under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule when furnished via telehealth, visit <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/Telehealth/Telehealth-Codes> .

OSUHP will cover telemedicine and telehealth visits. However, there are exclusions to what OSUHP considers appropriate. These exclusions include:

1. Telehealth provided through non-HIPAA compliant telehealth platforms. These platforms include FaceTime, Skype, and other non-secure, non-approved platforms.

2. Telehealth provided by a provider located in a setting that is not clinically appropriate.

### Types of Services Covered

The following telehealth services will be covered:

1. **Brief Check-Ins.** Brief communication technology-based services, also known as “virtual check-ins” or telephone visits, may be conducted under the following guidelines:
  - a. Patient is already established with provider (i.e., has visited provider within last 3 years).
  - b. Virtual check-in is real-time, interactive audio only or synchronous audio/visual.
  - c. Virtual check-in is not originating from an E/M visit within last 7 days.
  - d. Virtual check-in does not result in a follow-up visit within 24 hours or soonest available appointment.
  - e. Virtual check-in lasts between 5-10 minutes in duration.
2. **e-Visits.** Patients may also engage with providers through messaging features known as “e-Visits.” Messaging between provider and patients must be done through a HIPAA-compliant platform, such as Epic’s MyChart platform for billing eligibility.
3. **E-Consultation.** One physician can consult with a second physician for advice about a patient’s condition for non-emergent conditions through structured EMR facilitated communication.
4. **Clinician to Clinician.** Originating site provider requests emergent evaluation and consult from distant site. Provider utilizes audio-video technology for patient presenting with a variety of cases – ambulatory, emergent, inpatient.
5. **Video Visit.** A scheduled encounter with a physician and an established patient from one site to another using live, interactive audio and visual transmissions. This connection often occurs through MyChart (EPIC) video visits.

Due to the dependence on technology in providing telehealth/telemedicine, if there is a technological failure, disconnection, or other technological reason the visit is not fully completed, reimbursement is not guaranteed. OSUHP will only reimburse for fully completed visits via real-time audio/visual interaction between the patient and provider.

Utilization of telehealth visits will be regularly monitored for compliance.

### REFERENCES

- 39 Ohio Rev. Code. § 3902.30. (2022). Coverage for telemedicine services. Available at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3902.30>. Accessed August 25, 2023.
- 39 Ohio Rev. Code. § 3922.01. (2012). Definitions. Available at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3922.01>. Accessed August 25, 2023.
- 47 Ohio Rev. Code. § 4723.01. (2017). Nurse definitions. Available at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4723.01>. Accessed August 25, 2023.
- 47 Ohio Rev. Code. § 4743.09. (2022). Available at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4743.09>. Accessed August 25, 2023
- American Medical Association, *Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®)* and associated publications and services

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Manual System and other CMS publications and services.