



# EMS|MC

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## Updated Medicare Telemedicine Fact Sheet

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a fact sheet regarding telehealth services. In an effort to broaden access to Medicare beneficiaries, telehealth services have expanded allowing for a wider range of services that do not require travel to a healthcare facility.

Prior to the waiver, the telehealth services required the patient to be located in a designated rural area, provided in a physician office, clinic, hospital or other type of medical facility, and required an established relationship with the physician or non-physician practitioner.

Under the new waiver, these restrictions have been removed and allow for services to be rendered in non-designated rural areas, may provided in the patient's home and do not require an established relationship with the physician or non-physician practitioner.

Those eligible for reimbursement for these telehealth visits include: physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurse midwives, certified nurse anesthetists, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, registered dietitians and nutrition professionals.

**\*Important Note** – there is no provision for ambulance providers to be reimbursed for these services at this time. However, the American Ambulance Association (AAA) has submitted a letter to CMS requesting a blanket waiver for all Ambulance Services to provide both Treatment-In-Place/Treatment-No-Transport Services as well as coverage for transportation to alternative destinations. If approved, the AAA is essentially requesting permission for all providers to operate under the ET3 provisions that were published last year. It is important to document these encounters to include all services rendered to the patient including the telehealth services rendered by the physician/non-physician practitioner. This documentation will be essential if these services are approved for retroactive coverage at a later date.

It is also important to note that the Office of Civil Rights published a directive that they would not be enforcing the provisions of HIPAA Security with regards to the telehealth technologies that are being used to communicate with patients. This directive allows providers to utilize communications such as Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Handouts video, or Skype, without risk that the OCR might seek to impose penalties for non-compliance.

These waivers will allow an ambulance provider to conduct telehealth services in the patient's home in order to provide critical services to your community. The physicians and non-physician practitioners may be paid for these services at the same payment rate as if they were provided in the healthcare setting. At this time, there is no provision for payment for the ambulance suppliers to provide these services, but this is subject to change in the near future.

We will continue to keep you updated with the latest information being distributed as we are monitoring it as it is released.

CMS Telehealth Fact Sheet can be found [here](#).  
HIPAA OCR Communication can be found [here](#).

If you any further questions please reach out to your Strategic Account Manager.

Thank you,



Chief Compliance Officer  
EMS Management & Consultants, Inc.

