

## Telemedicine FAQs

### What is telemedicine?

Telemedicine is a method of delivering healthcare services using live interactive telecommunications, both audio and video, when the provider and member cannot be in the same physical location.

### What are the benefits of providing telemedicine services?

- Telemedicine offers a more convenient method for both members and providers to interact. Services can be delivered from your home, office or even when traveling and save the member time of traveling to your office location.
- Telemedicine allows access to more patients, both because of geography as well as members with mobility or transportation issues. Consequently, it may also reduce the number of no-shows and cancellations.
- Opportunity for extra revenue – can make it easier to offer appointments at non-standard hours or additional hours as well.

### How can I add telemedicine services to my current New Directions contract?

You must complete the Telemedicine Attestation. A link to an online attestation form will be emailed to you. You can also contact your provider relations representative to get access to the online form.

### What equipment and technology are required to provide telemedicine services?

A stable broadband internet connection through a computer with a web camera and microphone, which works through a HIPAA-compliant telemedicine software/platform.

### How do I know if my telemedicine software/platform is HIPAA-compliant?

Telemedicine software/platform vendors are required to have a Business Associate Agreement (BAA). For HIPAA compliance the BAA must define methods used by vendor to ensure the security of the data and how they maintain and audit for security.

### Which services can be delivered via telemedicine?

Most services that are one-on-one and considered face-to-face, including initial evaluations and therapy, can be delivered via telemedicine. In most cases, prescribing and medication management are allowed, depending on state and federal regulations. Refer to the *AL Telemedicine Behavioral Health Services Information* document for specifics.

### How are telemedicine appointments scheduled?

The process should be the same as it is for an in-person appointment. The member will schedule their appointment for a telemedicine service by contacting the provider and asking for telemedicine, or the provider can offer telemedicine as an option. In most cases, the provider will need to direct the member to download software or an app and/or go to a particular website for scheduling.

**Are there specific state requirements related to telemedicine services?**

Yes, there are different requirements per state, and some federal as well. Always consult the laws and regulations before beginning telemedicine. Here's a resource to assist from the American Telemedicine Association: <http://www.americantelemed.org/main/policy-page/state-policy-resource-center>

**Are there different rates for delivering services via telemedicine?**

No. The rates for telemedicine services remain the same as services delivered face-to-face.

**How are claims and billing different for telemedicine?**

Claims submitted for telemedicine must use the Place of Service code '02' *Telemedicine* when submitted. Further, the services should include one of the telemedicine modifiers 'GT' *Via interactive audio and video telecommunication systems* or '95' *Synchronous Telemedicine Service Rendered via Real-Time Interactive Audio and Video Telecommunications System* to indicate telemedicine. Make sure the member's benefit plan includes telemedicine as a covered benefit. Otherwise, claims submission should be done as normal by verifying benefits and eligibility and submitting via the same method.

**Where can I learn more about telemedicine?**

- [Center for Connected Health Policy](#)
- [American Telemedicine Association \(ATA\)](#)
- [ATA State Policy Resource Center](#)
- [National Consortium of Telemedicine Resource Centers](#)
- [Southeastern telemedicine Resource Center – Alabama, Florida, \(Georgia, & SC\)](#)
- [Heartland Telemedicine Resource Center – Kansas, Missouri, & \(Oklahoma\)](#)
- [Upper Midwest Telemedicine Center – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, & Ohio](#)
- [American Psychiatric Association Telepsychiatry Toolkit](#)
- [Adopting Telemedicine in Practice](#)