

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To require private health insurance and Medicaid coverage for services delivered through telehealth.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Telehealth Reimbursement Act of 2013”.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this act, the term:

(1) "Health benefits plan" shall have the same meaning as provided in section 2(4) of the Prompt Pay Act of 2002, effective July 23, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-176; D.C. Official Code § 31-3131(4)).

(2) "Health insurer" shall have the same meaning as provided in section 2(5) of the Prompt Pay Act of 2002, effective July 23, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-176; D.C. Official Code § 31-3131(5)).

(3) "Provider" shall have the same meaning as provided in section 2(7) of the Prompt Pay Act of 2002, effective July 23, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-176; D.C. Official Code § 31-3131(7)).

(4) “Telehealth” means the delivery of healthcare services through the use of interactive audio, video, or other electronic media used for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment; provided, that services delivered through audio-only telephones, electronic mail messages, or facsimile transmissions are not included.

Sec. 3. Private reimbursement.

(a) A health insurer offering a health benefits plan in the District may not deny coverage for a healthcare service on the basis that the service is provided through telehealth if the same service would be covered when delivered in person.

(b) A health insurer shall reimburse the provider for the diagnosis, consultation, or treatment of the insured when the service is delivered through telehealth.

(c) A health insurer shall not be required to:

(1) Reimburse a provider for healthcare service delivered through telehealth that is not a covered under the health benefits plan; and

(2) Reimburse a provider who is not a covered provider under the health benefits plan.

(d) A health insurer may require a deductible, copayment, or coinsurance amount for a healthcare service delivered through telehealth; provided, that the deductible, copayment, or coinsurance amount may not exceed the amount applicable to the same service when it is delivered in person.

(e) A health insurer shall not impose any annual or lifetime dollar maximum on coverage for telehealth services other than an annual or lifetime dollar maximum that applies in the aggregate to all items and services under the health benefits plan.

(f) Nothing in this act shall preclude the health insurer from undertaking utilization review to determine the appropriateness of telehealth as a means of delivering a healthcare service; provided, that the determinations shall be made in the same manner as those regarding the same service when it is delivered in person.

Sec. 4. Medicaid reimbursement.

Medicaid shall cover and reimburse for healthcare services appropriately delivered through telehealth if the same services would be covered when delivered in person.

Sec. 5. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 6. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December

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24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.

Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia

Mayor
District of Columbia