



2022 IN REVIEW

Telehealth Impact Report

Driving the future of health through research, resources, and advocacy for telehealth and digitally enabled care models.

The American Medical Association's advocacy continues to make it easier for physicians to expand care to their patients via telehealth and receive fair compensation for their services.

Expanding access, coverage, and payment:

- Telehealth availability to Medicare patients nationwide, wherever they are located including in their homes.
- Secured (PDF) legislation extending telehealth flexibilities in Medicare through December 2024 via enactment of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which lifts geographic and originating site restrictions, extends Medicare coverage of audio-only services, delays the in-person visit requirements for tele-mental health services, and extends the Acute Hospital Care at Home program, all policies strongly supported by the AMA.
- Telehealth payment rates increased to in-person visit rates through 2023.
- Remote monitoring covered for acute and chronic conditions.
- CPT® codes for audio-only visits approved for coverage throughout COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, with payment rates equivalent to established patient visits. Advocating for this coverage to remain in place through at least 2024.
- Private payers continue to follow Medicare's guidance to ensure access to care for patients.
- Permanently expanded CMS definition of equipment that can be used for telehealth to include smart phones that are capable of two-way real-time interactive communication.
- Continued the [Return on Health campaign](#) through the Physician Grassroots Network to collect case studies for how physicians and practices are measuring the value of telehealth in their environments.

AMA continues to provide Congress policy recommendations and guidance to permanently lift geographic and site restrictions on Medicare covered telehealth services and repeal Congressionally imposed in person requirement on Medicare telemental health services:

- Endorsed and actively campaigning for congressional action on:
 - H.R. 1332/S. 368 - the "Telehealth Modernization Act of 2021," which would lift the rural-only restriction and add any site where a patient is located as a potential originating site.
 - H.R. 2903/S. 1512 - the "CONNECT for Health Act," which would lift the rural-only restriction, add the home as an originating site, establish a process for the HHS Secretary to add originating sites, and provide HHS with the permanent authority to waive section 1834(m) restrictions.
- Secured a 2-year extension on the lifted geographic and site restrictions and continues to advocate for this policy to be made permanent.
- Endorsed and campaigning for congressional action on H.R. 4058/S. 2061, the "Telemental Health Care Access Act," which would repeal the new congressional imposed in-person requirement on Medicare telemental health services.
- Ongoing advocacy to oppose imposition of new statutory barriers to accessing Medicare covered telehealth services, such as in-person requirements, as part of legislation to lift existing access barriers to Medicare covered telehealth services.

AMA provided state-level policy recommendations and guidance to expand coverage, access and payment of high-quality telehealth:

- In collaboration with Manatt Health, created a new issue brief on telehealth payment policies.
- Continued to promote AMA’s model telehealth bill and worked with 5+ state medical associations on legislation expanding coverage, payment and/or access to telehealth.
- Updated state laws chart summarizing key provisions in state telehealth laws to inform and identify legislative trends.
- Hosted two webinars on telehealth including an Advocacy Insights Webinar titled “The Future of Telemedicine” moderated by AMA President Jack Resneck Jr., MD, and featuring Lisa Robin and Sean Parker from FSMB to discuss FSMB’s recently updated model guidelines on “The Appropriate Use of Telemedicine Technologies in the Practice of Medicine.”
- AMA staff also participated in numerous webinar and podcasts hosted by national organizations like the Center for Connected Health Policy and American Antitrust Institute to provide a state legislative perspective and advance AMA policy in this issue area.
- Telehealth was a key issue discussed during the 2022 AMA State Advocacy Roundtable.
- Ongoing advocacy with leading state policy organizations, including National Governors’ Association (NGA), National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) and National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC).

•Addressing chronic disease:

- Advocacy on opioid epidemic and pain treatment led DEA to offer significant telehealth and audio-only flexibilities for controlled substance prescribing and opioid use disorder treatment during public health emergency.
- Commercial insurers and CMS continue to cover virtual sessions of the National Diabetes Prevention Program, Lifestyle Change Program and Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program during COVID-19 and future public health emergencies.



- Developed self-measured blood pressure education on use of device at home, which can be delivered via telehealth and is covered during public health emergency.
- To support the self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) services covered by Medicare as of 1/1/2020, AMA and AHA jointly submitted a National Coverage Determination request to CMS for coverage of validated SMBP devices, and a subsequent request for a benefit category determination (as durable medical equipment).
- Became a member of the HHS Office of Women’s Health Self- Measured Blood Pressure partner program.

Developing the code set for the future of medicine:

- CPT Panel adopted new codes for Remote Therapeutic Monitoring and the new AI taxonomy for medical services and procedures as an appendix in CPT.
- CPT and the RUC formed a joint workgroup to address telemedicine office visits. The workgroup assessed available data to determine accurate coding and valuation for E/M office visits performed via audio-visual and audio only modalities. If approved by the CPT Editorial Panel, new telemedicine office visit codes will be available for CPT 2025.
- Ongoing policy collaboration and advancement of telehealth and digital medicine payment through the AMA Digital Medicine Payment Advisory Group (DMPAG).

The AMA continues to develop the resources you need to quickly implement and optimize telehealth and other digitally enabled care programs.

- The [Telehealth Quick Guide](#) is updated to provide the latest changes and best practices in telehealth policy, coverage, payment, and workflows to support physicians and practices in successfully optimizing and sustaining telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The AMA Digital Health Implementation Playbook series provides step-by-step guidance to implement and adopt digital health solutions. This regularly updated series includes playbooks on telehealth and remote patient monitoring.
- The AMA offers a coding scenario resource and a tool comparing Medicare telehealth coding and payment policy to private health plan policy.
- The Telehealth Immersion Program guides physicians, practices and health systems in optimizing and sustaining digitally-enabled care at their organizations. Through a series of curated webinars, interactive peer-to-peer learning sessions, virtual discussions, bootcamps and resources on-demand, the program offers a comprehensive curriculum and enhanced experience to help physicians and other health care providers navigating the world of digital medicine alongside peers nationwide.
- The Telehealth Initiative (TTI) wrapped up a second cohort in collaboration with 5 new medical associations including Massachusetts, Montana, Iowa, New York, and Cleveland and the Physicians Foundation. Participating practices developed eight new case studies on measuring the value of telehealth in their environments to support advocacy efforts at the local and national level.
- Expansion of the Validated Blood Pressure Device Listing™ (VDL) including connected devices, and growing use of the IHO SMBP Essentials: Student Edition module on Ed Hub.
- Continued funding from HHS Office of Minority Health via the American Heart Association's National Hypertension Control Initiative to create training for 350+ community health centers about SMBP.
- AMA's Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium published its Telehealth Clinical Education Playbook as part of the AMA Digital Health Implementation Playbook Series and promoted the resource to education leaders of medical schools and residency programs.
- The AMA provides physician-focused CME with practical advice on how to select and implement a telehealth service model, such as the AMA's STEPS Forward Telehealth and Telemedicine and Team-Based Care toolkit and the Telehealth Integration and Optimization toolkit.
- AMA Physician Innovation Network provides virtual panel discussions that convene industry stakeholders to discuss topics such as addressing equity in telehealth and measuring the value of virtual care.
- AMA podcasts, available on ReachMD, provide updates on the latest telehealth advocacy and best practices.
- AMA's 7-step SMBP quick guide provides implementation and CPT coding guidance on SMBP and RPM to physicians and practices.

1,398

media mentions of AMA's telehealth efforts

15+

speaking engagements at leading conferences (HLTH, Rock Health, Digital Medicine Conference, DTx, etc.)

AMA research spurs solutions that keep physician and patient needs at the forefront of telehealth delivery.

- AMA fielded and released its third [digital health research study](#) focused on measuring physicians use of and key motivations for using digital health.
- The AMA continues to interview physicians to combine experience with proven processes to develop practical, tested implementation resources.
- The AMA released a [Telehealth Use Survey](#) to explore trends in use, challenges, and opportunities for future research.
- Collaboratively brought key industry stakeholders together to develop a [blueprint for digitally enabled care](#) focused on breaking down silos and driving the future of health.
- The AMA, in collaboration with Manatt Health and a diverse working group (physician practices, large

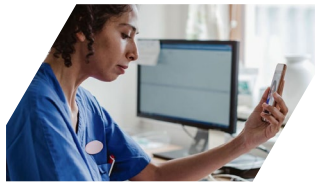
employers, health plans and patient advocates), developed a [report](#) articulating the opportunities and challenges of incorporating virtual care (telehealth) and other digital tools to accelerate the adoption of behavioral health integration (BHI).

- AMA continued to collect case studies from organizations using its [Return on Health \(ROH\) framework](#) focused on assessing the value (financial, clinical, outcomes, health equity, access, patient, and physician experience) of digitally enabled in practice.
- Multiple SMBP pilots underway with health care organizations to gather learning about care teams' implementation needs and ROI of SMBP.



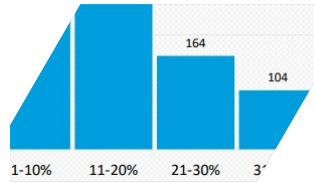
Healthcare IT News

New AMA blueprint seeks to tap the full potential of digital health



Mobile Health News

AMA survey: Doctors more optimistic about digital health tools



Healthcare Economist

AMA Survey on Telehealth



Health Populi

Telehealth Update from the AMA – Setting the Context for ATA 2022 [Spoiler Alert: Doctors Want to Keep Using Telehealth]

For more information on AMA's ongoing telehealth efforts, visit ama-assn.org/practice-management/digital/telehealth-resource-center-definitions.