

Comment Report

HF 706

A bill for an act relating to reimbursement rates for health care services provided to covered persons by telehealth, and including applicability provisions.(See HF 784.)

Subcommittee Members: Fry-CH, Bergan, Sunde

Date: 03/02/2021

Time: 09:00 AM

Location: RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber

Name: Steve Cassabaum

Comment: I have been practicing physical therapy for over 30 years and since 1995 in the state of Iowa. I would have never believed I would use telehealth services to provide physical therapy to my patients. However, during the 20202021 Covid19 pandemic I have used telehealth service to provide invaluable service to those patients who due to fear of the Covid virus chose to not come in personally and receive physical therapy. The ability to provide telehealth services, although not ideal, provided valuable interaction and information to help prevent and improve patients ability to improve and resolve health conditions and functional limitations. In person care is still the best way to provide Physical therapy but in the current climate of the pandemic this was simply the best choice for some of our patients. The time spent on a telehealth visit is almost always shorter than an inperson visit but the cost of paying the therapist for their expertise is the same as if would have been if the patient was seen in person. Therefore, for the time spent via telehealth vs inperson the per unit or per CPT code should be reimbursed at the same rate. The benefits to the patient is invaluable to the prevention of further decline in health and wellbeing and to help reduce pain and improve function for the patient. The cost will be less than in person treatment (due to the decreased total time spent with the patient) but the cost of providing care per time spent by the professional is the same. Therefore, I strongly advocate for the same reimbursement for that same professional time whether via telehealth or inperson. Thank you, Steve Cassabaum, DPT; Legislative Chair for the Iowa Physical Therapy Association; Licensed Physical Therapist in the state of Iowa.

Name: Renee (and Schulte

Comment: Thank you for bringing this bill forward. I am representing NAMI Iowa, Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association and Integrated Telehealth Partners and we are in support of this bill. We have seen a huge increase in the need for and use of telehealth over the past year. In addition to use increase, we have seen no shows drop as more people are able to keep appointments when online. Many of our providers has increased costs due to the pandemic office costs, continuing ed, and other expenses continued while additional costs were added to assure safe and secure means for visual telehealth for providers who did not previously use it. The previous practice of paying providers a portion of a face to face session is not appropriate given the costs are the same or in some cases increased. We ask for your support on this important legislation and thank you for your support.