

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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BETHANY L. HAMM
ACTING COMMISSIONER

DATE: December 27, 2018
TO: Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
FROM: Stefanie Nadeau, Director, Office of MaineCare Services
RE: Public Law 2017, Chapter 307, An Act Regarding MaineCare Coverage for Telehealth Services

On August 2, 2017, the Maine State Legislature passed Public Law 2017, Chapter 307, An Act Regarding MaineCare Coverage for Telehealth Services. The law requires the Department of Health and Human Services (the Department) to meet with the Maine Telehealth and Telemonitoring Advisory Group, conduct educational outreach to providers and MaineCare members, submit an annual report to the Joint Standing Committee of the Legislature with jurisdiction over health and human services matters on the use of telehealth in the MaineCare program, and to promulgate and adopt routine technical rules to implement the law's recommendations.

In October 2017, the Department engaged in routine technical rulemaking to implement the new requirements of P.L. 2017, ch. 307 into the MaineCare Benefits Manual. The Department conducted a public hearing on December 5, 2017, and accepted comments through December 15, 2017. After completion of the Maine Administrative Procedures Act process, the Department filed and adopted the rule with the Secretary of the State's Office on April 4, 2018. As a result of the routine technical rulemaking, the Department submitted a State Plan Amendment (SPA) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on June 29, 2018. The SPA was approved by CMS on August 15, 2018.

In September and November of 2018, the Maine Telehealth and Telemonitoring Advisory Group met three times. The group discussed and tackled a wide variety of topics and tasks, including new telemonitoring technology, drafting a MaineCare billing guide, rural broadband issues across the state, challenges and barriers facing providers of telehealth and telemonitoring, and what other states are doing to further their states' telehealth services. The group focused efforts on comparing MaineCare's Telehealth Services policy to private pay insurances throughout the state. The group also worked on a series of recommendations to present to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services in the future.

Also during 2018, the Department offered trainings and informational forums on the use of telehealth with MaineCare providers. MaineCare included a presentation by Danielle Louder from Northeast Telehealth Resource Center into some of the provider trainings.

In September 2018, Thomas Leet and Sam Senft from the Office of MaineCare Services facilitated a webinar open to the public and presented by the Northeast Telehealth Resource Center with support from the Maine CDC entitled “Telehealth in Maine: Reimbursement and Sustainment.”

MaineCare has seen a utilization increase in telehealth services since the new policy was adopted in April 2016. MaineCare requires providers to utilize the GT modifier when billing services provided via telehealth. The GT modifier is used by providers on billing claims to help MaineCare identify and track services provided through telehealth.

In 2018, MaineCare providers served over 6,000 members through the Telehealth Services policy. Those members received services all over Maine from 703 different MaineCare enrolled providers, totaling 21,246 Medicaid claims billed utilizing the telehealth GT modifier.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need any further information.

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