

# Medicare FFS Telehealth Visit Coverage under Coronavirus Response Act (CRA) as of 3.17.20

## Coverage and Enforcement Changes

- Medicare will reimburse certain telehealth services regardless of patient's COVID-19 diagnosis.
- As of 3.6.20, Medicare will pay for office, hospital, and any other visits furnished via telehealth and including in patient's places of residences, using the Medicare facility payment rate.
- Covered services include common office visits, mental health counseling, and preventive health screenings will be covered telehealth services.
- Pursuant to a Policy Statement issued by the OIG on 3.17.20, OIG will permit providers to reduce or waive patient cost-sharing for telehealth visits. CMS billing rules separately apply.
- HHS will not audit prior doctor-patient relationships required for telehealth visits under a 1135 Waiver.

## Reimbursement Limitations

- Medicare payment for telehealth services is limited to professionals and pays the same reimbursement as in-person services.
  - Health care facilities housing telehealth services may only bill for the originating site facility fee.
- GT modifier required when billing telehealth services under CAH Method II.
- G0 modifier required when telehealth service diagnoses or treats acute stroke.
- (Note that no federal approval is needed for state Medicaid programs to reimburse providers for telehealth services in the same manner that states pay for face-to-face services)

US HHS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicare Telehealth Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Medicare Telemedicine Health Care Provider Fact Sheet, CMS.GOV (Mar. 17, 2020). President Trump Expands Telehealth Benefits for Medicare Beneficiaries During COVID-19 Outbreak, CMS.GOV (Mar. 17, 2020). US HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) Policy Statement on Practitioners That Reduce, Waive Amounts Owed by Beneficiaries for Telehealth Services During the COVID-19 Outbreak and HHS OIG Policy Statement Regarding Physicians and Other Practitioners That Reduce or Waive Amounts Owed by Federal Health Care Program Beneficiaries for Telehealth Services During the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak, (Mar. 17, 2020).