



February 11, 2020

Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Maryland House of Delegates
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Committee on Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland Senate
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Mr. Chairman, Madam Chair and Members of the Committees

I am writing on behalf of New Benefits to express support for the proposed telemedicine legislation before you, Senate Bill 402 (Kagan and Lam) cross-filed with House Bill 448 (Rosenberg), as it would allow the patient-practitioner relationship to be established via telemedicine using interactive audio as well as through video. We believe the Maryland should create telemedicine policies that preserve consistent standards and allow healthcare practitioners to use their knowledge and experience in deciding whether to use modern technology to provide care, without narrowly defining allowable technologies.

For more than a decade, we have offered telemedicine services through Teladoc to our members. Although New Benefits is headquartered in Texas, our presence in Maryland is substantial. Our clients include insurance companies, restaurants, hotels, hospital systems, small businesses and school systems. We connect Maryland residents with Maryland-licensed healthcare practitioners, who provide affordable, high-quality treatment of common, non-emergency ailments, and we have received virtually no complaints. Our experience is telemedicine provides patients with high-quality care that is safe, secure, timely and cost-effective.

My hope is that the Legislature will incorporate technology neutral language into the Maryland Code which does not require audio-visual technology to be used initially in treatment through telemedicine.

This language will position Maryland to better take advantage of telemedicine to address the significant areas of the state currently medically underserved, provide employers with a much-needed tool to manage health care costs and bring Maryland telemedicine policy in line with the vast majority of other states' rules regarding telemedicine.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have about our experience with telemedicine and can be reached at 1-800-800-8304 x1615.

Sincerely,

Joel Ray, CEO