



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 534 – Preserve Telehealth Act of 2023

Date: February 22, 2023

Position: Support

The Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care is in strong support of *Senate Bill 534 – Preserve Telehealth Act of 2023*. The bill extends two critical provisions of reimbursement policy for Medicaid and state-regulated private plans: 1) required reimbursement for audio-only services; and 2) reimbursement parity for telehealth services.

School-based health centers have used telehealth to reach students both during and after the pandemic. Telehealth has proven effective in supporting students with complex medical needsⁱ, behavioral health issues,ⁱⁱ and chronic diseases.ⁱⁱⁱ Through telehealth, school-based health centers in Maryland have been able to implement innovative models to address the needs of students. For instance, Howard County has been able to significantly expand access to care through telehealth modalities.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation to ensure Maryland’s telehealth reimbursement policies continue. Audio-only reimbursement is important, as not all families have access to reliable broad band services; and payment parity ensures that providers have fair reimbursement to cover their costs. If we can provide any additional information, please contact, Robyn Elliott at (443) 926-3443 or relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ Van Cleave J, Stille C, Hall DE. Child Health, Vulnerability, and Complexity: Use of Telehealth to Enhance Care for Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs. *Acad Pediatr*. 2022 Mar;22(2S):S34-S40. doi: 10.1016/j.acap.2021.10.010. PMID: 35248246.

ⁱⁱ Cunningham NR, Ely SL, Barber Garcia BN, Bowden J. Addressing Pediatric Mental Health Using Telehealth During Coronavirus Disease-2019 and Beyond: A Narrative Review. *Acad Pediatr*. 2021 Sep-Oct;21(7):1108-1117. doi: 10.1016/j.acap.2021.06.002. Epub 2021 Jun 9. PMID: 34118499; PMCID: PMC8413840.

ⁱⁱⁱ Casemiro LKDDS, Lopes-Júnior LC, Jardim FA, Sulino MC, de Lima RAG. Telehealth in outpatient care for children and adolescents with chronic conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic: A scoping review protocol. *PLoS One*. 2022 Jun 10;17(6):e0269821. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0269821. PMID: 35687557; PMCID: PMC9187091.