DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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DHS expands telemedicine services for public health care program enrollees

April 2, 2020

DHS received federal approval to temporarily ease certain limits on receiving care and services through telephone and video visits that can instead be provided safely and effectively without an in person face-to-face visit.

Effective April 1, 2020, the DHS commissioner:

- Removed the cap of three telemedicine visits per week for Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare enrollees
- Expanded the definition of telemedicine to include telephone calls so providers who have a telemedicine agreement already in place with DHS can serve patients through telephone visits
- Allowed a provider's first visit with a Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare enrollee to be conducted on the phone.

These measures help public health care program enrollees and providers follow social distancing best practices.

Under current state law, telemedicine services are limited to specific providers and certain delivery methods (Minnesota Statute, 256B.0625, subdivision 3b (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/256b.0625)).

Delivering services via telemedicine requires submission of a telemedicine assurance statement as well as several documentation requirements. Clinics and providers need to ensure that telemedicine services are only used when safe and effective for the member.

These changes remain in effect until the peacetime emergency is terminated or until it is rescinded by proper authority.

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