



Coalition to
Protect Telehealth

Support House Bill 3498 to Protect Access to Telehealth

Chief Sponsors: Rep. Deb Conroy and Sen. Mattie Hunter

Chief Co-Sponsors Rep. Greg Harris, Rep. Norine Hammond, Rep. Ryan Spain and Rep. Bob Morgan

Issue: Without legislative action from the Illinois General Assembly, patients will abruptly lose access to the healthcare services they have relied on receiving from healthcare professionals and providers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coalition to Protect Telehealth Position: To ensure that safe and reliable telehealth care that improves patient outcomes by reducing access barriers continues to be provided after the COVID-19 pandemic, we need the General Assembly to pass legislation on both coverage parity and payment parity with in-person services. Telehealth must be reimbursed at the same rate as in-person care.

Background: The Coalition to Protect Telehealth, a diverse group of Illinois healthcare providers, professionals and patient advocates, is urging the General Assembly to protect innovative telehealth approaches, so Illinoisans can continue to safely access critically needed quality, affordable care beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Telehealth has helped drive a reduction of missed appointments, demonstrated increased care plan adherence, and improved chronic disease management. Access barriers that exacerbate healthcare disparities such as transportation, lost income, missed work and school, or the stigma of seeking help are greatly reduced or eliminated when telehealth is used. Patients are empowered to address care needs swiftly, preventing conditions from worsening and requiring unnecessary visits to urgent care or a hospital.

[House Bill 3498](#) establishes the following protections:

- Bars insurers from requiring patients to prove a hardship or access barrier in order to receive healthcare services through telehealth.
- Prohibits geographic or facility restrictions on telehealth services, allowing patients to be treated via telehealth in their home.
- Protects patient preference by establishing that a patient cannot be required to use telehealth services.
- Ensures patients will not be required to use a separate panel of providers or practitioners to receive telehealth services.
- Aligns telehealth practice with privacy laws for in-person practice, while giving healthcare providers the professional latitude to determine the appropriateness of specific sites and technology platforms for telehealth services.
- Aligns telehealth coverage and payment with in-person care, making appropriate patient access to care the priority and removing harmful barriers that shift costs to the patient and healthcare provider.
→ Equal coverage eliminates policy loopholes that allow insurers to create separate telehealth networks which ship tax dollars to out-of-state providers that work outside of a patient's care team.

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