



March 9, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: HR 6074 & Waiver Authority for Medicare Part B Telehealth Services

Dear Secretary Azar and Administrator Verma:

In response to the spread of COVID-19, I write to urge you to leverage the new telehealth waiver authority provided under H.R.6074, *the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020*, signed on March 6, 2020 by President Trump. This timely and essential authority allows for the removal of the telehealth geographic site restrictions for Medicare beneficiaries, ensuring Americans who are the most susceptible to this virus can quickly and safely access the care they need.

As our nation's only organization solely committed to the advancement of telehealth, the ATA commends Congress and the Administration for its swift action enacting H.R.6074. The law's new waiver authority could prove to be an invaluable tool for providers across the country as their patients prioritize concerns with exposure over accessing essential care. Telehealth can improve access to care, speed diagnosis and treatment, and limit the risk of person-to-person spread of the virus. We ask that you expedite and issue a blanket section 1135 waiver for the existing Medicare telehealth originating site restrictions during the coronavirus public health emergency and provide guidance to health care facilities and providers on any modifications to payment policies and procedures that have been made once the section 1135 waiver has been invoked.

Thank you for your dedication to ensuring Americans are protected during this public health crisis.



If you have any questions or would like to further discuss our request, please contact Kevin Harper, Director, Public Policy at kharper@americantelemed.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Mond Johnson", followed by a comma.

Ann Mond Johnson
CEO