

Telehealth (TeleBH)

Behavioral Health Care

We are committed to the care and well-being of our members. We are also committed to working with you as a partner to develop the best possible treatment plans for all patients.

What is Behavioral Telehealth?

The COVID-19 public health emergency enabled the advancement of delivering care virtually, providing an opportunity for mental health providers to be reimbursed for behavioral telehealth services¹, also known as teleBH.

Telehealth or telemedicine is the delivery of healthcare services using virtual technology. Providers can provide medical advice, a diagnosis, or a prescription by video or phone. It is a convenient way for patients to access health care services using a computer, tablet, or smart phone from the privacy and comfort of their own home. Additional benefits include:

- Reduced appointment and office wait times for patients.
- Faster and more equitable access to care and prescriptions.
- Decreased appointment cancellations by eliminating barriers such as need for childcare, missed work/school, and transportation.
- Provides patients with access to specialists who speak the same language or have similar cultural backgrounds.
- Increased comfort for patients to talk about mental health and substance use related concerns, who may have felt uncomfortable in an office setting.
- Enables increased scheduling capabilities to treat more patients.

What are Common TeleBH Services?

- Psychiatric assessments
- Individual online counseling
- Online group therapy
- Treatment related to substance use disorder
- Telepsychiatry for prescription monitoring and refills

¹Telehealth is not to be used for any condition where patients are required to see a doctor or for medical emergencies.

How Can You Engage Patients in TeleBH?

- Help patients better understand what telehealth is, the benefits of virtual health care, and how to schedule a telehealth appointment.
- Provide extra guidance and support for patients to know how to access and troubleshoot your telehealth platform.
 - Send reminders and instructions ahead of the telehealth appointment to ensure access.
 - Explore the option of “rooming” which has shown more successful telehealth encounters.
 - Train support staff on the basics of your telehealth platform.
- Discuss patient rights and responsibility, set expectations, and plan for emergency situations at each appointment.
- Treat patients as if they are sitting across from you, avoid distractions and communicate with empathetic expressions just as you would if they were in your office.
- Check your state’s current laws and reimbursement policies, and code claims correctly.

Support

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Please view the Provider section of our website at www.ambetterofnorthcarolina.com for additional tools and resources. You may also contact a Provider Relations or Quality Improvement Specialist for assistance at **1-833-863-1310 (Relay 711)**.

Additional Resources

- CCHPCA.org - Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP) telehealth-related laws and regulations
- TELEHEALTH.HHS.gov - Telehealth: Health care from the safety of our homes

References

- NCQA.org – Follow-Up After Hospitalization (FUH) for Mental Illness
- This document is an informational resource designed to assist licensed healthcare practitioners in caring for their patients. Healthcare practitioners should use their professional judgment in using the information provided. HEDIS® measures are not a substitute for the care provided by licensed healthcare practitioners and patients are urged to consult with their healthcare practitioner for appropriate treatment. HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). *2022 ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes **CPT copyright 2022 American Medical Association (AMA). All rights reserved. CPT is a registered trademark of the AMA.