

# Telehealth in California



Telehealth in California was expanded to all licensed health care providers through AB415, the Telehealth Advancement Act:

1374.13. (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to recognize the practice of telehealth as a legitimate means by which an individual may receive health care services from a health care provider without in-person contact with the health care provider.

2290.5. (3) "Health care provider" means a person who is licensed under this division.

(6) "Telehealth" means the mode of delivering health care services and public health via information and communication technologies to facilitate the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of a patient's health care while the patient is at the originating site and the health care provider is at a distant site. Telehealth facilitates patient self-management and caregiver support for patients and includes synchronous interactions and asynchronous store and forward transfers.

[Source \(http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab\\_0401-0450/ab\\_415\\_bill\\_20111007\\_chaptered.html\)](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab_0401-0450/ab_415_bill_20111007_chaptered.html)

"This Division" refers to Division 2, Healing Arts, which contains the licensing laws for all health care providers in California, including NDs.

To treat patients via skype, facetime, or phone, you must first obtain verbal consent from the patient and include documentation of that consent in their patient records. It is important that your patients live in the state where you are licensed. If you are Skyping with a patient in a different state, you will also need to be licensed in that state. For out-of-state NDs, you must be licensed in California to see California patients, and you may only practice within the scope of your California license. All confidentiality laws still apply to telehealth patients.

AB415 establishes that insurance companies must cover telehealth and no in-person meeting must have occurred for a patient to have their telehealth services covered through insurance (section 1374.13 (c) (d) & (e)).

Although insurance companies must cover telehealth without an in-person visit first, some malpractice carriers like ANC and NCMIC say they cannot offer coverage unless you see someone in person. Follow up via phone consultations is usually covered.

Additional telehealth information can be found here - [California Telehealth History \(http://www.caltrc.org/legislation\\_reg/california-legislation/\)](http://www.caltrc.org/legislation_reg/california-legislation/). The actual legal statues are found in [AB415 \(http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab\\_0401-0450/ab\\_415\\_bill\\_20111007\\_chaptered.html\)](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab_0401-0450/ab_415_bill_20111007_chaptered.html) passed in 2011.