May 1, 2020

Expanded Medicare Coverage for Audio-Only Phone Services

Dear CPA Members,

Good news! Medicare has expanded coverage for audio-only phone services during the COVID-19 crisis. CPA has been advocating, along with APA, for this expansion and we want to thank all of you who sent advocacy letters on this issue.

According to APA’s article “Phone only telehealth services for Medicare during COVID-19”:

- Effective April 30, 2020, psychologists can now provide many typical services by audio-only telephone.
- Audio-only phone services may be covered retroactive to March 1, 2020. APA will provide an update on the retroactive date after verification from CMS.
- Covered services include diagnostic interviews, psychotherapy, psychological and neuropsychological evaluations, along with other commonly billed mental health services.
- Claims for traditional audio-visual telehealth services should include modifier 95. CMS has not provided guidance on whether a different modifier is needed for audio-only phone services. APA will provide an update once that clarification is received.

For a complete list of covered services and additional information on billing, please see the APA article cited above.


As always, CPA members who have questions can contact me at ewinkelman@cpapsych.org.

Take Care,

Elizabeth

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