



# TELEHEALTH AND ENDOCRINOLOGY: PASS THE TELEHEALTH MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2024

Telehealth visits have become the preferred mode of care for many patients across the country, especially within the endocrinology specialty. According to Medicare Part B claims data, **endocrinology used telehealth services the most of any specialty**. The Endocrine Society urges Congress to pass an extension of the **Medicare telehealth flexibilities** before they **expire on December 31, 2024**.

## **TELEHEALTH PROVIDES SAFE ACCESS TO CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS:**

The Endocrine Society represents over 18,000 physicians and scientists who work to treat and research endocrine disorders, including diabetes, cancer, and obesity. Our members provide care to vulnerable patients with complex chronic conditions. Expanding access to telehealth services ensures that people with chronic conditions can safely receive timely access to medically necessary care.

## **TELEHEALTH ENSURES GREATER ACCESS FOR UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS AND OLDER AMERICANS:**

Expanded access to telehealth services will ensure that underserved populations receive the care they need. For example, a [GAO report](#) found that the proportion of Medicare beneficiaries using telehealth was similar across racial and ethnic groups. Increasing telehealth access is also beneficial for patients in rural areas who may have to travel long distances to get necessary care. This is particularly helpful to expand access to endocrinology care as there are severe shortages of endocrinologists in many areas of the country. Telehealth also ensures access to care for older Americans who lack transportation options.

## **TELEHEALTH PRIORITIES:**

### **EXTEND MEDICARE TELEHEALTH WAIVERS:**

CMS currently allows important telehealth flexibilities to ensure that endocrinologists and other physicians can deliver care via telehealth and audio-only to the more than 30 million people on Medicare across the country. The waiver of the originating site and geographic restrictions enable Medicare beneficiaries to receive virtual care in their homes. Relaxing these requirements has reduced the burden on patients with limited access to transportation, increased compliance with managing physician monitoring, and provided relief to those balancing work or caregiving responsibilities with receiving necessary medical care.

### **SUPPORT THE TELEHEALTH MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2024 (H.R. 7623):**

While the Endocrine Society supports the permanent waiver of the originating site and geographic restrictions, we understand that a permanent telehealth policy is currently cost prohibitive. **Therefore, we urge Congress to pass the Telehealth Modernization Act of 2024 before the end of the year.** This legislation, originally introduced in the House and Senate to make these flexibilities permanent, has been amended in the House to provide a two-year extension of these telehealth flexibilities, which provides some certainty for Medicare practitioners that Medicare will continue to support virtual care, allowing them to budget and plan for their practices accordingly.