

TELEHEALTH FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE



What is Behavioral Telehealth?

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.

Telehealth or telemedicine is the delivery of health care 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 Services?

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



How Can You Engage Patients?

- Help patients better understand what telehealth is, the benefits of virtual health care, and how to schedule a telehealth appointment.

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How Can You Engage Patients? Cont.

- 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.



Additional Support

1. [Center for Connected Health Policy](#)
(CCHP) telehealth-related laws and regulations
2. [Telehealth.hhs.gov](#)

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



Please view the Provider section of our website [AmbetterofAlabama.com](#) for additional tools and local resources or contact a Provider Relations or Quality Improvement Specialist for assistance.

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