



The Honorable Brian Schatz
United States Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Scott
United States Senate
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

March 3, 2021

Dear Senators Schatz & Scott:

On behalf of more than 30,000 people with cystic fibrosis (CF), the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation applauds your effort to extend and expand access to critical telehealth services after the public health emergency (PHE) by introducing *The Telehealth Modernization Act*. Through the COVID-19 response bills, Congress has provided important waiver authority to the Department of Health and Human Services to bypass statutory restrictions on Medicare coverage of telehealth services, and telehealth usage during the pandemic demonstrates the need to extend and expand these flexibilities beyond the PHE.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Medicare rules largely limited use of a patient's home as the originating site to those living in rural areas or with a specific condition. The drastic increase in telehealth usage during the PHE has demonstrated the burden of geographic restrictions and shown it is appropriate and safe for patients to receive care from their homes. While telehealth visits are not suitable for all health care services and are not a substitute for in-person care, there are several aspects of a regular CF visit that can be conducted through telehealth. For instance, clinicians can easily review medical history, current medications and symptoms, and adjust a patient's care plan. CF patients and care teams can also review data from home spirometers to track trends in lung function. This legislation permanently removes these antiquated location requirements, permitting people with CF to access their established care team from their homes.

Beyond eliminating originating site restrictions, the COVID-19 PHE waivers have increased the types of providers who are eligible to provide telehealth services. The CF clinical care team includes physicians, nurses, dietitians, social workers, and respiratory therapists – each of whom plays a unique role in managing CF care. Having access to all members of the care team helps patients better maintain and manage their care, leading to more consistent and better outcomes. This legislation enables the HHS Secretary to maintain and expand providers eligible to deliver telehealth services, therefore increasing access to care and improving care continuity for patients with CF.

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of access to telehealth services and provided evidence that certain barriers to access are no longer necessary or beneficial to patients or providers. The CF Foundation thanks you for your leadership on this important issue for people with cystic fibrosis and we support your efforts to extend and expand access to critical telehealth services post the public health emergency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary B. Dwight".

Mary B. Dwight
Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer
Senior Vice President, Policy & Advocacy
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation