AN ACT EXPANDING MEDICAID COVERAGE OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (Effective from passage) (a) For purposes of this section, (1) "telehealth" means the remote delivery of physical and mental health care services to facilitate the diagnosis, treatment, education, care management and self-management of a patient via information and communication technologies that may include, but are not limited to, (A) videoconferencing, (B) computer programs, and (C) mobile cellular phone applications; (2) (A) "asynchronous", (B) "originating site", (C) "remote patient monitoring", (D) "store and forward transfer", and (E) "synchronous" have the same meaning as provided in section 19a-906 of the general statutes; and (3) "electronic consultations" means the sharing of information and advice electronically by providers.

(b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall expand coverage of telehealth services under the medical assistance program. Notwithstanding any provision of section 19a-906 of the general statutes, the commissioner shall provide Medicaid coverage state wide not later than July 1, 2020, for (1) asynchronous transmission of health information, (2) electronic consultations, (3) remote patient monitoring, (4) store and forward transfer of a patient's medical information, and (5) synchronous forms of telehealth services whenever such coverage
meets federal Medicaid requirements for efficiency, economy and quality of care.

(c) On and after July 1, 2019, the commissioner shall phase in statewide coverage of telehealth services beginning with (1) chronic conditions, including, but not limited to, diabetes and cardiac conditions, (2) behavioral disorders, including, but not limited to, substance abuse, and (3) mental health disorders. The commissioner shall establish requirements for telehealth providers to (A) ensure privacy of patient information and (B) obtain consent for telehealth services. The commissioner may limit coverage of telehealth services to originating sites and licensed providers approved by the commissioner.

(d) The commissioner may seek federal approval for a Medicaid state plan amendment, if necessary, to establish rates of reimbursement for telehealth services not already included under other rates of reimbursement in the Medicaid state plan. The commissioner shall seek federal approval of any Medicaid waiver or other program authorized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that would allow for (1) a more expeditious expansion of telehealth services, or (2) a higher rate of federal reimbursement for such services. The submission of any such Medicaid state plan amendment or waiver shall be in accordance with the provisions of section 17b-8 of the general statutes.

Sec. 2. Section 17b-245e of the general statutes is repealed. (Effective from passage)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

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Statement of Legislative Commissioners:
In Section 1(a), the definitions of "telehealth" and "telemental health" were combined and redrafted for clarity and accuracy and subdivisions were redesignated accordingly; in Section 1(c), "(A)" was added before "ensure" and "(B) obtain" was added before "consent" for clarity and consistency with drafting conventions.

HS Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO