

Hi,

I am writing this letter as a therapist myself in CT. The issue with telehealth payments is a large one. Telehealth has made the communities be able to stay consistent with mental health and addiction treatment. We have seen such disparities on who could attend and be consistent in the past and part of this is related to transportation issues, weather- which again impacts those in worse economic stages because of bus need or pick up for weather. Again- telehealth has become something that many of us have adjusted to use for a crisis, appointments when someone is very ill like with Covid or under quarantine and even other autoimmune issues, Individuals like caretakers who could not leave their homes before because of concerns with having someone to watch an in need person in their home and the list goes on. There is NO Different training for us as therapists and our needs are the same financially to provide good quality care and continue our CEUs annually to be the best providers we can be as well as some form of an office to do the multiple aspects of our job. Nothing. Has changed. It is absurd that anyone would ever suggest that our job should be paid less if it is somewhere else. Do you personally get paid less if you work from Home or a different office ? This needs to be a permanent change to allow all to have access to what they need. When they need it. No questions asked. It's time we allow all individuals to receive the care they desperately need to make a healthier community and treat professionals with respect. We have been fighting for our rights during this pandemic for this thankless job of preventing suicides, Murders, self injurious behaviors, relapses and worsening of all mental health diagnoses across the board.

Today is the last day to submit written testimony to make telehealth coverage permanent and fair! Please consider writing a brief letter. If you have seen a mental healthcare provider online in the last year this impacts you!!!

H.B. No. 5596 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH S.B. No. 1022 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH

I am an LPC and LADC in Milford, CT with over 50 clients and receiving calls about 3-5 daily with requests for telehealth. We cannot safely see clients for an hour long appointment in an office which is closed. In addition wearing masks prevents us from being able to read people's facial expressions and see if someone is crying often. We are unable to leave doors open for confidentiality and are unable to see emotional cues we need. Telehealth has allowed all of this. Please make telehealth a required option with all insurances. And the telehealth pay parity must exist.

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