



ALLIANCE *for*  
CONNECTED CARE

February 26, 2020

The Hon. Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
The Hon. Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker  
The Hon. Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman  
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressional leaders:

We are writing to urge you to include a provision in the COVID-19 supplemental appropriation that will allow telehealth visits to be covered in traditional Medicare during the public health emergency.

Telehealth can help patients experiencing coronavirus symptoms access medical professionals quickly, and reduce the risk of exposing others. While physicians cannot confirm a diagnosis of coronavirus through a telehealth interface, they can screen patients, assign a risk category, answer questions and recommend the next steps.

Current Medicare restrictions will hinder the use of telehealth among seniors in traditional Medicare. Section 9 of the bipartisan, bicameral Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act of 2019 (S. 2741 & HR 4932) would empower the Secretary of Health and Human Services to waive restrictions on the use of telehealth for Medicare beneficiaries during national emergencies.

Including this provision in the upcoming supplemental legislation will encourage health systems and others to leverage telehealth in their communities, allowing for critical care connections. This expanded capacity will help preserve access to in-person care for those in critical need and allow the majority of initial screenings to happen outside of the hospital.

Thank you for your consideration, we look forward to working with you on this important effort. Please contact Chris Adamec at 202-640-5941 or [cadamec@connectwithcare.org](mailto:cadamec@connectwithcare.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Krista Drobac  
Executive Director