ForwardHealth Coverage of Telemedicine Services

David Stepien
Benefit Policy Section
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Coverage History

- **Fall 2004**: ForwardHealth begins coverage of certain mental health and substance abuse services provided via telemedicine.

- **July 2006**: ForwardHealth expands coverage of telemedicine to include office visits, consultations, and End Stage Renal Disease management services.
Current ForwardHealth Coverage

Services covered when provided via telemedicine:

- Outpatient mental health services
- Outpatient substance abuse services
- Health and behavior assessment and intervention
- Office visits
- Consultations
- End Stage Renal Disease management services
“Distant Site” Requirements

- **Distant Site**: Location of the rendering provider.
- Services must be rendered by one of the following provider types:
  - Physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners
  - Nurse midwives
  - Psychiatrists and Ph.D. psychologists
“Originating Site” Requirements

- **Originating Site**: Site at which the member is located.
- Must have the equipment and staffing necessary to facilitate a telemedicine service.
- Cannot be an emergency room.
Additional Requirements

Services must:

- Be of sufficient audio and visual fidelity and clarity as to be functionally equivalent to a face-to-face contact.
- Meet all applicable HIPAA confidentiality requirements.
- Be thoroughly documented in the member's medical record in the same way as if it were performed as a face-to-face service.
Reimbursement

- The rendering provider ("distant site") is reimbursed the same rate for a telemedicine service as a face-to-face service.
- The facility at which the member is located ("originating site") is reimbursed a facility fee.
Current ForwardHealth Coverage

Services not separately reimbursable as telemedicine:

- Telephone and email conversations between providers.
- Telephone and email conversations between providers and members.
- Store and Forward services.
## Expenditures (Calendar Year 2013)

### Office Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee-For-Service ($)</th>
<th>Managed Care ($)</th>
<th>TOTAL ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Visits</td>
<td>134,300</td>
<td>167,600</td>
<td>301,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mental Health Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee-For-Service ($)</th>
<th>Managed Care ($)</th>
<th>TOTAL ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Services</td>
<td>77,800</td>
<td>117,400</td>
<td>195,200</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### All Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee-For-Service ($)</th>
<th>Managed Care ($)</th>
<th>TOTAL ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Other</td>
<td>10,900</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>13,100</td>
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</table>

### Facility Fee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee-For-Service ($)</th>
<th>Managed Care ($)</th>
<th>TOTAL ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility Fee</td>
<td>174,100</td>
<td>163,400</td>
<td>337,500</td>
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</table>

### TOTAL ($)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee-For-Service ($)</th>
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<th>TOTAL ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL ($)</td>
<td>397,100</td>
<td>450,600</td>
<td>847,700</td>
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</table>
Future Challenges

- Universal standards and definitions for telemedicine are still being developed.
- Some geographic areas continue to have low broadband internet access.
- Technology can change faster than the policy making process.
Future Opportunities

- Improve knowledge among providers of current telemedicine coverage.
- Monitor emerging telemedicine technology.
- Work with other state agencies to facilitate and enhance the use of telemedicine in Wisconsin.