

Alabama

Medicaid Program: Alabama Medicaid

Program Administrator: Alabama Medicaid Agency

Regional Telehealth Resource Center:

Southeast Telehealth Resource Center

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STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
Definition of telemedicine/telehealth	
<p>Telehealth medical service means “the practice of medical care delivery initiated by a distant site provider who is physically located at a site other than the site where the patient is located, for the purposes of evaluation, diagnosis, consultation or treatment which requires the use of appropriate telecommunication technology.”</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.05</i></p>	<p>There is no explicit definition of “telemedicine” given in state Medicaid policy. However, the provider manual states, “Services must be administered via an interactive audio and video telecommunications system which permits two-way communication between the distant site physician and the origination site where the recipient is located (this does not include a telephone conversation, electronic mail message, or facsimile transmission between the physician, recipient, or a consultation between two physicians).”</p> <p><i>Source: AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>
Live Video Reimbursement	
<p>No reference found.</p>	<p>Alabama Medicaid reimburses for live video for the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults; • Office or other outpatient visits; • Individual psychotherapy; • Psychiatric diagnostic services; • Neurobehavioral status exams. <p>However, for some specialties, special conditions or circumstances must be present for reimbursement to occur.</p> <p>For all telemedicine services, an appropriately trained staff member or employee familiar with the patient or the treatment plan must be immediately available in person to the patient.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015) & AL Admin. Code r. 560-X-6-.14 (2011).</i></p>
Store and Forward Reimbursement	
<p>No reference found.</p>	<p>No reference found.</p>

STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
Remote Patient Monitoring Reimbursement	
<p>Telehealth home care services prescribed by a provider and delivered by a licensed certified home care agency are exempt from the standards laid out by the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.04</i></p>	<p><u>In Home Monitoring Program</u></p> <p>Alabama Medicaid will reimburse remote patient monitoring through the In Home Monitoring Program.</p> <p>Patients with the following medical conditions may register for the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes • Congestive Heart Failure <p>The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) Nurse Care Manager evaluates the patient, provides any needed equipment such as a scale, glucometer, blood pressure cuff and phone with a speaker.</p> <p>Data transmission occurs through a secure telephone call.</p> <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 712, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>
Email/Phone/FAX	
<p>No reimbursement for telephone. No reference found for email or FAX.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin Code r. 560-X-6-.14 (2011).</i></p>	<p>No reimbursement for email. No reimbursement for telephone. No reimbursement for FAX.</p> <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>
Online Prescribing	
<p>Telehealth medical services provided at an established medical site is sufficient to establish a proper provider-patient relationship.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.09</i></p> <p>A patient provider relationship includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing that the person requesting the treatment is in fact the person he/she claims to be; • Establishing a diagnosis through the use of acceptable medical practices, including patient history, an appropriate physical examination, and indicated diagnostic studies; • Discussing with the patient the diagnosis, the evidence for it, and the risks and benefits of various treatment options; and • Ensuring the availability of appropriate coverage of the patient for follow-up care. <p>Treatment and consultation recommendations made in a telemedicine setting, including issuing a prescription via electronic means, will be held to the same standards of</p>	<p>No reference found.</p>

STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
<p>appropriate medical practice applied to traditional in-person clinical settings.</p> <p>An online or telephonic evaluation solely by questionnaire does not constitute an acceptable standard of care.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-11</i></p> <p>Services provided at sites other than Established Medical Sites</p> <p>Telehealth medical services may not be used to treat non-malignant pain with scheduled drugs, with the exception of patients who are enrolled in a qualified multidisciplinary hospice or palliative care program.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-10</i></p> <p>Prescribing drugs to an individual the prescriber has not personally examined is usually inappropriate". Before prescribing a drug, the physician should make an informed medical judgment. Ordinarily, this will require that the physician personally perform an appropriate history and physical exam, make a diagnosis, and formulate a therapeutic plan, which might include a prescription.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code r. 540-X-9-.11 (2011).</i></p>	
Consent	
<p>A provider is required to obtain informed consent from the patient.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code r. 540-X-15-08.</i></p>	<p>A written informed consent is required prior to an initial telemedicine service.</p> <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>
Location	
<p>The definition of an "Established Medical Site" is the "location where a patient would present to seek medical care, where there is a patient site presenter, and where there are sufficient technology and medical equipment to allow for an adequate physical evaluation which is appropriate for the patient's presenting complaint. A defined provider-patient relationship is required. A patient's private home is not considered an established medical site, except for emergent conditions."</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-05</i></p> <p>Telehealth Medical Services at an Established Medical Site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telehealth medical services provided at an established medical site may be used for all patient visits, including initial evaluations to establish a proper provider-patient relationship between a distant site provider and a patient. 	<p>Originating site must be located in Alabama. The distant site may be located outside of Alabama as long as the physician has an Alabama license and is enrolled as an Alabama Medicaid provider.</p> <p>For rehabilitative services, the originating site must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician's office; • Hospital; • Critical Access Hospital; • Rural Health Clinic; • Federally Qualified Health Center; • Community mental health center (to include co-located sites with partnering agencies); • Public health department. <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 773, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>

STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For new conditions, a patient site presenter must be reasonably available on site at the established medical site to assist with the provision of care. The distant site provider has discretion to determine if a patient site presenter is necessary for follow-up evaluation or treatment of a previously diagnosed condition. • Tasks may be delegated to the patient site presenter, if they are qualified. • A patient site presenter is not required for mental health services, unless the patient may be a danger to himself/herself or others. <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.09</i></p> <p>Telehealth Medical Services at a Site other than an Established Medical Site</p> <p>A distant site provider who provides telehealth medical services at a site other than an established medical site for a patient's previously diagnosed condition must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the patient one time in a face to face visit before providing telehealth medical care; or • See the patient without an initial face-to-face visit, provided the patient has received an in-person evaluation by another provider who has referred the patient for additional care, and the referral is documented in the patient record. <p>A patient site presenter is not required for a pre-existing condition previously diagnosed by a provider through a face-to-face visit or for mental health related services (unless the patient may be a danger to himself or others).</p> <p>A distant site provider may treat an established patient's new symptoms which are unrelated to pre-existing conditions, provided that the patient is advised to see a provider in a face to face visit within 72 hours. A distant site provider may not provide continuing telehealth medical services for these new symptoms to a patient who is not seen by a provider in a face to face visit within 72 hours.</p> <p>Each patient must be seen for an in-person evaluation at least once a year.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.10.</i></p>	
Cross-State Licensing	
<p>A distant site provider must have a current and unrestricted Alabama license.</p> <p><i>Source: AL Admin. Code 540-X-15-.05</i></p> <p>"A special purpose license allowing practitioners</p>	<p>Providers must have an Alabama license.</p> <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>

STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
<p>licensed in other states to practice across state lines may be issued.”</p> <p><i>Source: Code of AL Sec. 34-24-502 - 507 (2012).</i></p> <p>AL passed legislation to be a part of the interstate licensing compact</p> <p><i>Source: AL Act 2015-197 (2015).</i></p>	
Private Payers	
No reference found.	No reference found.
Site/Transmission Fee	
No reference found.	<p>No reimbursement for originating site or transmission fees.</p> <p><i>AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>
Miscellaneous	
<p>The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners adopted new rules to establish standards for telehealth medical services. See "comments" section for additional details not included in the categories above.</p>	<p>Effective for dates of service 1/16/2012 and thereafter, all physicians with an Alabama license, enrolled as a provider with the Alabama Medicaid Agency, regardless of location, are eligible to participate in the Telemedicine Program to provide medically necessary telemedicine services to Alabama Medicaid eligible recipients. In order to participate in the telemedicine program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physicians must be enrolled with Alabama Medicaid with a specialty type of 931 (Telemedicine Service) • Physician must submit the telemedicine Service Agreement/Certification form • Physician must obtain prior consent from the recipient before services are rendered. This will count as part of each recipient's benefit limit of 14 annual physician office visits currently allowed. <p><i>Source: AL Medicaid Management Information System Provider Manual, p. 538, (Jul. 2015).</i></p>

Comment:

New Regulations Passed

- AL Board of Medical Examiners (*Source: AL Admin Code 540-X-15*)
- AL Board of Optometrists (*Source: AL Admin Code 630-X-13-.02*)