

Georgia

Medicaid Program: Georgia Medicaid

Program Administrator: Georgia Dept. of Community Health

Regional Telehealth Resource Center:

Southeast Telehealth Resource Center

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STATE LAW/REGULATIONS	MEDICAID PROGRAM
Definition of telemedicine/telehealth	
<p>“Telemedicine means the practice, by a duly licensed physician or other health care provider acting within the scope of such provider’s practice, of health care delivery, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, or transfer of medical data by means of audio, video, or data communications which are used during a medical visit with a patient or which are used to transfer medical data obtained during a medical visit with a patient. Standard telephone, facsimile transmissions, unsecured e-mail, or a combination thereof do not constitute telemedicine services.”</p> <p><i>Source: Official Code of GA Annotated Sec. 33-24-56.4 (2012).</i></p>	<p>Telemedicine is the use of medical information exchange from one site to another via electronic communications to improve patient’s health status. It is the use of two-way, real time interactive communication equipment to exchange the patient information from one site to another via an electronic communication system. This includes audio and video communications equipment.</p> <p>Closely associated with telemedicine is the term “telehealth,” which is often used to encompass a broader definition of remote healthcare that does not always involve clinical services. Telehealth is the use of telecommunications technologies for clinical care (telemedicine), patient teachings and home health, health professional education (distance learning), administrative and program planning, and other diverse aspects of a health care delivery system.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 2, (Oct. 2017). (Accessed Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Live Video Reimbursement	
<p>Georgia requires coverage of telemedicine services (which includes live video), subject to contract terms and conditions. (See “Private Payers” section).</p> <p><i>Source: GA Rules & Regulations. Sec. 33-24-56.4 (2012).</i></p>	<p>Georgia Medicaid reimbursement for telehealth is specific to clinical services rendered via telemedicine. The service must be medically necessary, and the procedure individualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of an illness or injury under treatment, and not in excess of the member’s needs.</p> <p>Eligible services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office visits; • Pharmacologic management; • Limited office psychiatric services; • Limited radiological services; • A limited number of other physician fee schedule services.

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Eligible distant practitioners:

- Physicians
- Nurse practitioner
- Physician assistant
- Nurse-midwives
- Clinical nurse specialists
- Certified registered nurse anesthetists
- Dentists and dental hygienists
- Community mental health centers; community behavioral health providers; Clinical psychologists (CPs); and clinical social workers (CSWs);
- Speech language pathologists;
- Registered dietitians or nutrition professionals.

See each program manual for associated telemedicine guidelines.

Non-Covered Services:

1. Telephone conversations.
2. Electronic mail messages.
3. Facsimile.
4. Services rendered via a webcam or internet based technologies (i.e., Skype, Tango, etc.) that are not part of a secured network and do not meet HIPAA encryption compliance.
5. Video cell phone interactions.
6. The cost of telemedicine equipment and transmission.
7. Store and forward transactions
8. Failed or unsuccessful transmissions.

Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 2, (Apr. 2017). (Accessed Oct. 2017).

Local Education Agencies are allowed to enroll in the Health Check Program to serve as telemedicine originating sites only.

Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, Children's Intervention School Services (CISS). July 1, 2016. VI-4 (p. 9). (Accessed Mar. 2017).

GA Dept. of Community Health, Health Check EPSDT. Oct. 2017. X-5. p. 58. (Accessed Oct. 2017).

Georgia Medicaid will reimburse for mental health services for residents in nursing homes via telemedicine (although not available in all areas of the state) for "dual eligibles" (Medicaid and Medicare).

Nursing facilities and community behavioral health rehabilitation (CBHRS) service providers can arrange for the provision of specialized services to residents either

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	<p>in nursing facilities, via telemedicine or at the CBHRS location for residents in the Preadmission Screening and Resident Review Serious Mental Illness and dually diagnosed populations.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, Division of Medical Assistance, Part II Policies and Procedures for Community Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services, p. 30 & 36 (Oct. 2017). (Accessed Mar. 2017) & GA Dept. of Community Health, Division of Medical Assistance, Part II Policies and Procedures for Nursing Facilities, p. H-1 (p. 153). Oct. 2017. (Accessed Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Store and Forward Reimbursement	
No reference found.	<p>Georgia Medicaid will not reimburse for store and forward because an interactive telecommunication system is a condition of payment. However, reimbursement for professional and technical component can be made for store and forward applications such as an MRI, X-rays or ultrasounds. However no other reimbursement can be made.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 4 & p. 8, (Jan. 2016). (Accessed Mar. 2017).</i></p>
Remote Patient Monitoring Reimbursement	
No reference found.	No reference found.
Email/Phone/FAX	
<p>No reimbursement for FAX. No reimbursement for telephone. No reimbursement for email.</p> <p><i>Source: Official Code of GA Annotated Sec. 33-24-56.4 (2012).</i></p>	<p>No reimbursement for FAX. No reimbursement for telephone. No reimbursement for email.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 8, (Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Online Prescribing	
<p>Physicians are prohibited from prescribing controlled substances or dangerous drugs based solely on an electronic consult.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Rules & Regulations revised 360-3-.02 (2012).</i></p>	No reference found.
Consent	
No reference found in statute.	<p>The referring provider must obtain prior written consent.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 5, (Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Location	
No reference found.	<p>Eligible originating sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider offices; • Hospitals; • Rural Health Clinics (RHC);

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC); • Hospital based or CAH based renal Dialysis Centers • Skilled nursing facilities; • Local Education Authorities and School Based Clinics • County Boards of Health • Emergency Medical Services Ambulances; and • Pharmacies <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 3-4, (Jan. 2016). (Accessed Mar. 2017).</i></p> <p>FQHCs and RHCs cannot bill an originating site fee and distant site fee for telehealth services on the same encounter.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, Policies and Procedures for Federally Qualified Health Services and Rural Health Clinic Services, p. 22, (Oct. 2017), (accessed Oct. 2017).</i></p> <p>Local Education Agencies are allowed to enroll in the Health Check Program to serve as telemedicine originating sites only.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, Children’s Intervention School Services (CISS). Jan. 1, 2017. (p. 12) & GA Dept. of Community Health, Health Check EPSDT. Oct. 2017, 2017. X-5. p. 59. (Accessed Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Cross-State Licensure	
<p>Must be a Georgia licensed practitioner.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Admin. Code Sec. 360-3-.07</i></p>	<p>Providers must have a Georgia license.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 3, (Oct. 2017).</i></p>
Private Payers	
<p>Requires coverage of telemedicine services, subject to contract terms and conditions.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Rules & Regulations. Sec. 33-24-56.4 (2012).</i></p>	<p>No reference found.</p>
Site/Transmission Fee	
<p>No reference found.</p>	<p>Rural Health Clinics and FQHCs can collect a telehealth origination site facility fee.</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, Policies and Procedures for Federally Qualified Health Services and Rural Health Clinic Services, p. 22, (Oct. 2017), (accessed Oct. 2017).</i></p> <p>Eligible originating sites can bill for a facility fee.</p> <p>The cost of telemedicine equipment and transmission is not a covered service (unless a technical component of an x-ray, ultrasound or electrocardiogram is performed).</p> <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid</i></p>

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	<i>Telemedicine Handbook, p. 3 & 8, (Jan. 2016). (Accessed Mar. 2017).</i>
Miscellaneous	
	<p>Other Non-Covered Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services rendered via web cam or internet based technologies that are not part of a secured network and do not meet HIPAA encryption compliance • Video cell phone interaction <p><i>Source: GA Dept. of Community Health, GA Medicaid Telemedicine Handbook, p. 7, (Oct. 2017).</i></p>

Comments:

Professional Board Telehealth-Specific Regulations

- GA Composite Medical Board (Source: GA Admin. Code Sec. 360-3-07)