



County of Sacramento

INFORMATION LETTER

Date: March 16, 2020

To: All Mental Health Contracted Providers
All Contracted Alcohol and Drug Treatment Providers
All County Operated Providers

From: Alexandra Rechs, LMFT
Quality Management Program Manager, Behavioral Health Services

Subject: COVID-19 Telehealth Guidelines

This communication is providing guidelines related to the use of Telehealth Services. The purpose and goal of these guidelines is to reduce barriers to accessing services by expanding our use of telehealth services beyond medication services.

While it is our aim to improve access, the Division of Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is also obligated to ensure safe, quality care and protect beneficiaries' Protected Health Information in compliance with HIPAA, the California Medical Information Act, and, if applicable, 42 CFR Part 2 or California Welfare & Institutions Code section 5328. With those responsibilities in mind the MHP is issuing the following guidelines and recommendations:

1. Providers will review the attached updated Telehealth P&P. Attachment A: ***Telepsychiatry Services Technical Guidelines Checklist and Attestation for Local Providers*** must be signed by the administrator who has contract signing authority and returned to your County Contract Monitor and Program Manager prior to implementing Telehealth. The P&P can also be found at Sacramento County Behavioral Health website [PP-BHS-QM-00-10-DBHS-Telepsychiatry](#).
2. The use of a HIPAA compliant platform for communication is necessary to protect beneficiaries protected health information (PHI). These could include, but are not limited to: ZOOM, SBR Health, VSee, Skype for Business, etc.
3. Providers, including all direct service provider staff and supervisors, will review both the ***Guidelines for Use of Telehealth Treatment*** and ***Staff Attestation for Telehealth Services***. Attestation will be signed by Provider staff and placed in the staff's personnel file.
4. Providers will review the Guidelines for Use of Telehealth Treatment with beneficiaries (and legal guardians if applicable). A copy of these guidelines will be provided/sent to the beneficiary for future reference. Documentation of this review and agreement will be entered into the beneficiary's record.

5. Providers will develop or update a policy and procedure for oversight and monitoring for client safety, quality of care and HIPAA privacy protections related to Telehealth Services. This P&P will be sent to the MHP Quality Management Unit at QMInformation@saccounty.net
6. Providers will update Consents for Treatment to include the use of telehealth as an option for service provision.

I would like to thank and acknowledge UC Davis SacEDAPT for their collaboration in our Telemental Health pilot and for allowing us to use and modify documents developed during the pilot for this effort.

Questions may be directed to QMInformation@saccounty.net