

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3601

August 26, 2020

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Verma:

We write to thank you for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) recently proposed rule regarding the expansion of telehealth. The telehealth flexibilities worked and we urge promulgation of the rule to make them permanent.

Throughout the current, unprecedented crisis, Americans have seen the benefits of expanded telehealth services. Not only do these services help to facilitate public health mitigation strategies by increasing social distancing, but these services allow patients to maintain continuity of care to help avoid additional negative consequences from delayed preventive, chronic, or routine care. Further, telehealth services can help to increase participation for those who are medically or socially vulnerable, those who do not have ready access to providers, and those for which an in-person visit is not practical or feasible.

Given these benefits, we have been extremely proud to see telehealth's expanded use throughout the current crisis. As you know, before the crisis began, only 14,000 beneficiaries per week received a Medicare telehealth service. However, during the crisis, over 10.1 million beneficiaries have received a Medicare telehealth service. This expansion was made possible due to CMS' addition of 135 services such as emergency department visits, initial inpatient and nursing facility visits, and discharge day management services, that could be paid when delivered by telehealth.

CMS' proposed rule will help to cement these services, thereby making permanent the common-sense telehealth flexibilities that have helped Medicare beneficiaries during the coronavirus pandemic. This will give clarity in a time of need and will provide consistency and confidence to seniors and clinicians during this unprecedented time. As such, we support CMS' proposed rule and urge you to promulgate the rule to ensure the health and continuity of care for our nation's seniors and their clinicians.

Thank you,



M.C.

Kevin Hern
Member of Congress



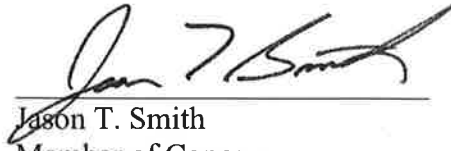
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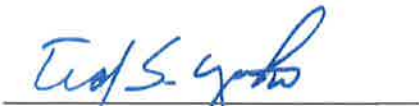
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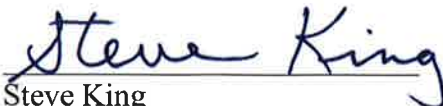
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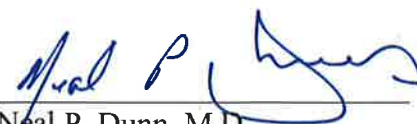
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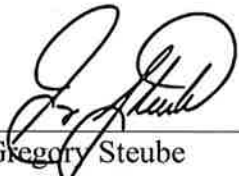
Jaime Herrera Beutler
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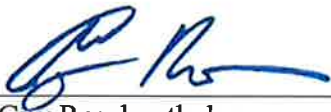
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