Technology and COVID-19:

Digital Health and Telemedicine
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SAFER - Safe Actions For Employee Returns
Guest Speakers

Rene Quashie  
VP, Policy & Regulatory Affairs  
Consumer Technology Association

Anas Al-Hamwi  
Senior Director, Health & Safety  
Walgreens

Dr. Matt Lambert  
Lead ER Physician and CMIO  
HCI Group
“Telehealth” and “Telemedicine” Often Used Interchangeably

American Medical Association
“Telemedicine” is using electronic communications services that connect a clinician in one location with a patient in another location.

Medicare
“Telehealth” focuses on two-way, real-time interactive communication between the originating site and distant site physicians to deliver health services.

Medicaid
“Telemedicine” seeks to improve a patient's health by permitting two-way, real-time interactive communication between the patient, and the physician or practitioner at the distant site (Medicaid.gov).

WHO
“Telehealth” is the delivery of health care services, where patients and providers are separated by distance.
Telehealth Drivers

• Increasing aging population
  • By 2030, 65+ will be 20% of population
• Clinician shortage
• Technology
• Insurance coverage
• Pandemic
Telehealth Surge Snapshot

- Less than 1% of visits via telehealth before pandemic

- Telehealth claim lines increased over 4,000% nationally (from 0.16% of medical claim in June 2019 to 6.85% in June 2020 (FAIR Health)

- 50% used telehealth during pandemic (Doctor.com)
  - 71% have considered using telehealth

- Dep't of Veterans Affairs
  - Veterans used telehealth more than 120,000/week during the height of pandemic
  - Usually 10,000/week
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

Allows HHS to exercise authority to temporarily waive or modify certain requirements of the Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP programs and HIPAA through duration of the PHE

Also HHS broad authority to provide grants and enter into contracts, as well as use funds to immediately respond to the PHE
Medicare Telehealth Pandemic Statistics

Before the public health emergency, approximately 13,000 beneficiaries in fee-for-service Medicare received telemedicine in a week.

In the last week of April, nearly 1.7 million beneficiaries received telehealth services.

In total, over 9 million beneficiaries have received a telehealth service during the public health emergency, mid-March through mid-June.
Medicare Telehealth Pandemic Statistics

• About 0.1% of primary care visits by telehealth before pandemic

• Increased to about 48% of primary care visits at the height of pandemic (April)
No significant differences by race or ethnicity among beneficiaries who received telemedicine services

1 out of 3 beneficiaries received telehealth using audio-only telephone

26 percent of beneficiaries who received nursing home visits did so by telehealth
Medicare Telehealth Pandemic Statistics

30 percent of female beneficiaries and 25 percent of male beneficiaries have received telemedicine services.

34 percent of beneficiaries below the age of 65 have received a telemedicine service:
- 25 percent among beneficiaries ages 65-74
- Almost 30% for ages 75-84
Telehealth Issues

- Broadband/Digital divide
- Service/payment parity
- Licensure (other legal/regulatory issues)
- Training
- Equipment
Going Forward

• Post-pandemic telehealth use
• Legislative efforts
• Clinician/consumer buy-in
• Technology
• Insurance reimbursement approach
CONTACT INFO

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Discussion
How has the health industry utilized technology and digital innovations in their response to COVID-19?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
How has digital health/telemedicine supported patients that would normally be seen in person? How has it fallen short?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
How can employers support their employees when it comes to telehealth?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
What do you expect the "new normal" to look like in your organization?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
Relating the noted increase of mental health distress, illness, and substance use over the past six months in correlation to the COVID-19 pandemic, what has worked well? What needs refining?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
What kind of supports (training, standardization of care, guidelines, etc.) will the medical workforce need to continue to provide and improve the quality of telehealth support?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
Do you have privacy concerns related to the increased use of telehealth? How would you respond to those who do have these concerns?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
Are there unexpected side effects (positive or negative) for increased telehealth utilization?

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS?
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Thank you!

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