

To Whom It May Concern,

Please consider my statement on behalf of Telehealth coverage for today's hearing.

As a pediatric occupational therapist and mom of two children, I am asking you to support continued coverage of telehealth services. My company works directly with children and families with significant disabilities who require and rely on targeted interventions that they have not otherwise been able to access during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these children and their families have overly relied on their school districts to provide support services and the regression in their skills as result of that closure has been devastating because of the changes in their routines. These families turn to medical providers like myself to continue the high quality of care that their children need in order to maintain skills, acquire new skills, and function when their already small worlds have been shrunk as a result of the current health crisis.

Telehealth services are allowing children and their families to access the high quality care that they require, but these services are also addressing core strategies and life skills that parents are then carrying over in the home environments when professionals are unable to enter their homes. This is a time of survival for so many of us, and our most vulnerable human beings are even more reliant on their caregivers for daily functioning. With telehealth, clinicians are able to "be" in the home, supporting parents and providing skilled intervention for these young children.

As COVID-19 is an ever-changing pandemic and trends in other parts of the country indicate that it will continue to negatively impact our lives, these children do not need any lapse in insurance coverage to compound those already stressful realities. They cannot afford gaps in coverage and clinicians should not have to argue insurance companies on social media platforms in order for them to provide services that are in line with their members' policies and this unprecedented time in our history.

Please continue to support telehealth coverage throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic so that our most vulnerable human beings can continue to access the services they require.

Sincerely,

Alescia Ford-Lanza

Alescia Ford-Lanza MS OTR/L, ATP
Occupational Therapist
Assistive Technology Practitioner
Consultant
Adapt & Learn, LLC.