

**Telehealth
Bill No. LCO No. 3614
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Town: Glastonbury, Connecticut

Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon, Senator Kelly, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato, and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee: My name is Dr. Dana Wiseman, and I am the Medical Director at Generations Family Health Center's Willimantic site. Generations is a Federally Qualified Community Health Center that provides medical, dental, behavioral health and support services in eastern Connecticut. This part of Connecticut is extremely rural and lacks public or reliable transportation systems.

There have been several, maybe dozens, of Husky patients I have not seen in a year or more because of a lack of transportation or Veyo being so unreliable. At some point I let them these patients know that I cannot continue refilling their medication without seeing them or even speaking to them on the phone now thanks to telehealth. With phone visits, maybe half of these patients are getting a look in from me, and so I feel I can safely continue to prescribe medications for them. Just talking to them I can find out what medicines are working and what needs to be changed or have their dosages adjusted. They can alert me to the medications they have stopped or no longer need that can be discontinued. They can tell me about side effects that caused them to stop a particular medication, and I often have a backup medication we can try instead. Many will share with me their current weight and blood pressure which is very helpful. I am talking about medications for diabetes, blood pressure and other heart conditions, GI and pain medications, all of which help to extend duration and add to quality of life and prevent hospital admissions and other healthcare costs. I can order lab work, imaging, physical therapy and other referrals all based on a phone discussion which is a very good substitute for an in-person encounter.

Telehealth visits, whether by phone or video, allow the ball to keep rolling rather than come to a dead stop. They serve to keep our population healthier, and reduce health and transportation costs, while not risking exposure to the deadly SARS Cov-2 virus to our patients and health centers.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.