

July 21, 2020

Statement of the Connecticut Chiropractic Association  
Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
LCO 3614, An Act Concerning Telehealth

Sen. Lesser, Rep. Scanlon, Sen. Kelly, Rep. Pavalock D'Amato and members of the Committee:

My name is Richard Duenas. I am a licensed Chiropractic physician and have practiced for many years here in Connecticut. I serve as legislative chair of the Connecticut Chiropractic Association and would like to offer brief comments on LCO 3614, *An Act Concerning Telehealth*.

We understand that the Committee is considering the policy changes to the telehealth law that were issued by Governor Lamont through Executive Orders 7G, 7DD, 7FF, and will be extending them through June 30, 2021 in a new telehealth statute. We appreciate that this legislation includes Chiropractic physicians as authorized providers of Telehealth services during this period. We assume there could be further legislation in the 2021 session to modify the current telehealth statute, Section 19a-906, and we look forward to being part of that process.

Chiropractic is a naturally based whole person healing art discipline and not a modality of health care service. The profession's educational standards are established by the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and Council for Higher Education Accreditation. All graduates of CCE accredited colleges are trained and qualified to provide primary care. Graduates receive their initial credentialing upon successful completion of examinations from the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, which is then followed by the specific requirements of a given State for licensure to practice.

Post graduate education may be sought in primary care such as pediatrics and family practice, as well as specialty care such as neurology, nutrition, orthopedics, radiology, sports medicine and others. The Connecticut chiropractic scope of practice authorizes Chiropractic physicians to provide whole person diagnosis and management of the individual's state of health without the use of drugs, surgery or the practice of osteopathy or obstetrics. There are no restrictions on the conditions we may address.

Since the inception of the profession in 1895 and licensure in Connecticut in 1917, patients have utilized their Chiropractic physician for their primary health care and specialty health care needs. The profession espouses natural methods of health care and has demonstrated exceptional, safe, and effective results for primary care and specialty care related conditions usually at costs that are less than medically provided care and often with better clinical outcomes. Patient satisfaction for chiropractic care is often rated excellent. Chiropractic physicians are qualified by training, state and federal law to provide physician level services including medical condition and history interviews, physical examinations, consultations, diagnostic testing, physical medicine, diet and nutritional services and products, preventive and wellness health care, and the prescription and provision of durable medical good services and products. Some of these services may be provided through telehealth communications. Pharmacology issues with patients are recognized and understood with respect to the effect of pharmaceuticals and toxins on health and well-being. Chiropractic physicians may consult with patients on the effects of pharmaceuticals and surgical procedures, but not prescribe nor perform surgery.

With respect to telehealth services, the Chiropractic profession has been in the telehealth statute since it was passed in 2015 and is included in this temporary telehealth structure that would run from passage to June 30, 2021.

Using telehealth, Chiropractic physicians discuss with patients many issues and, for illustrative purposes, provide these types of services:

- medical condition and history interviews (recent injury and/or illness interviews to determine and order diagnostic services needed prior to entry to the office thus minimizing time in the office).
- physical examinations (observations/inspections of patient conditions as viewed on the video component which may be signs of a condition warranting particular diagnostic testing and/or referral to other providers).
- consultations (discussions of dietary, nutrient supplementation, ergonomics needs for patient conditions).
- diagnostics (orders for laboratory (blood, urine, other) testing to help establish a definitive diagnosis of the patient's condition).
- physical medicine (online therapeutic exercise instruction).

It is essential for all physicians to establish a diagnosis of the patient's condition in order to provide efficient and effective care. Telehealth services offer Chiropractic physicians the opportunity to provide patients with an effective portal to share and obtain necessary information that is integral to the patient care experience in a safe and secure manner. This offers the patient some alleviation of the concerns that may attend the office setting.

Finally, we believe the Governor and Insurance Committee would want the insurance laws to be followed during this crisis. In this regard, we would like to draw your attention to Connecticut insurance statutes which require health insurance companies to provide coverage for services rendered by a Chiropractic physician to the same extent coverage is provided for services rendered by a medical doctor.

**Sec. 38a-507. Coverage for services performed by chiropractors.** Each individual health insurance policy delivered, issued for delivery, renewed, amended or continued in this state shall provide coverage for services rendered by a chiropractor licensed under chapter 372 to the same extent coverage is provided for services rendered by a physician, if such chiropractic services (1) treat a condition covered under such policy, and (2) are within those services a chiropractor is licensed to perform.

(P.A. 89-112; P.A. 90-243, S. 176; P.A. 11-19, S. 55.)

**Sec. 38a-534. Coverage for services performed by chiropractors.** Each group health insurance policy providing coverage of the type specified in subdivisions (1), (2), (4), (6) and (11) of section 38a-469, delivered, issued for delivery, renewed, amended or continued in this state shall provide coverage for services rendered by a chiropractor licensed under chapter 372 to the same extent coverage is provided for services rendered by a physician, if such chiropractic services (1) treat a condition covered under such policy, and (2) are within those services a chiropractor is licensed to perform.

(P.A. 90-243, S. 177; P.A. 11-19, S. 56.)

History: P.A. 11-19 inserted "amended or continued" and made technical changes, effective January 1, 2012.

See Sec. 38a-507 for similar provisions re individual policies.

The Connecticut Chiropractic Association appreciates the opportunity to participate in the telehealth program and we believe that our patients' health has been enhanced by use of this technology. As such, we support passage of LCO 3614, *An Act Concerning Telehealth*.