



COVID-19 and Telehealth

Barriers Remain

Expanding Telehealth for All Californians

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AARP at a Glance

- AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name.

AARP Policy

- AARP's policies are consistent with our mission to empower people to choose how they live as they age
- They guide the organization's advocacy and support for specific bills and regulations at the national, state and local levels.
- We focus on a range of issues vital to older Americans including economic security; health care; access to affordable, quality long-term care; creating and maintaining livable communities; consumer protections; caregiving; and ensuring that our democracy works better for all.
- AARP has extensive policy on Telehealth, Broadband and Health Technology
- AARP's policies are public and viewable at aarp.org/policybook

The 50+ Have Embraced Telehealth

300% increase in **virtual doctors' visits**

*among Medicare eligible seniors,
since mid-March 2020*





Telehealth Options Expanded

- Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act was signed into law, which among other things gives the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) the authority to temporarily waive certain Medicare requirements for telehealth services.
- Patients can now get telehealth services from an expanded group of health care professionals, including:

Barriers Remain

- Congress should remove geographic restrictions on Medicare coverage for telehealth services.
- States should adopt interstate licensure compacts for physicians, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, Registered Nurses, and other licensed health professionals, to expand provider networks and reduce interstate barriers to the use of telehealth services.

There are Issues to Overcome

MORE THAN **26%**
of Medicare beneficiaries
lack digital access at home



Telehealth During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Over 40% of deaths from COVID-19 have occurred in nursing homes.
- Older Americans and their families are being hit particularly hard by both the health and financial impacts of this pandemic.
- Family caregivers must work harder than ever to keep their loved ones out of nursing homes.
- In response, AARP is fighting to save lives and protect nursing home residents against sickness, neglect, and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, while also educating family caregivers on how to advocate for their loved ones.

Education the 50+ During COVID-19

- Mailer with the Department of Aging and the Governor's office with CA COVID-19 tips and resources.
- Top questions to ask if your loved one is in a nursing home.
- Top questions to ask about resumption of in-person visits at nursing homes.
- AARP Mutual Aid groups:
aarpcommunityconnections.org
- More at aarp.org/coronavirus and aarp.org/ca
- State resources can be found at www.covid19.ca.gov



Expanding Telehealth for All Californians

And Beyond



Legislative Advocacy 2020 and Beyond

- Legislature wrapped up work on August 31.
- The efforts to make permanent the expansions in coverage for telehealth were not achieved.
- Work has begun in a collaborative way to achieve goals in 2021 including:
 - Making the expansions permanent
 - High Speed Internet



Thank You

**For more information on AARP's
education on Covid**

<https://www.aarp.org/coronavirus/>