

SUBJECT TO RESOLUTION COMMITTEE REVIEW

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 203
(November 2020)

Introduced by: New York

Subject: COVID-19 Emergency and Expanded Telemedicine Regulations

Referred to: Reference Committee B

- 1 Whereas, The world is facing a global health crisis through the pandemic spread of the
2 coronavirus COVID-19 and as a consequence the health and safety of the people of the United
3 States are uncertain; and
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- 5 Whereas, The disease poses a heightened risk to immunocompromised individuals and other
6 vulnerable populations including the elderly, those with chronic lung disease, heart disease,
7 cancer, and/or diabetes; and
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- 9 Whereas, The COVID-19 pandemic has created situations where persons are instructed NOT
10 to go to their physicians' offices if experiencing cough with fever unless they are in a high risk
11 situation or experiencing shortness of breath and are told to present to the emergency
12 department of a hospital in such cases; and it is the medical community and community health
13 centers which serve a vital role in the maintenance of health and prevention of disease; and
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- 15 Whereas, On March 4, 2020, Congress voted to approve an emergency coronavirus spending
16 bill of \$8.3 billion to address this growing health crisis; and
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- 18 Whereas, Physicians and other medical providers must be enabled to respond to the growing
19 need for medical services including during mandatory quarantine and voluntary isolation and
20 physicians have adopted and adapted to the use of telemedicine as a tool for caring for their
21 patients; and
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- 23 Whereas, Technology is available to patients and physicians alike to allow for personalized
24 advice and management through various means including telephonic and video
25 communications (telemedicine), and the utilization of telemedicine for geographic areas where
26 access to physicians and other health care providers is not readily accessible has become
27 increasingly important, indeed many patients find telemedicine to be more convenient and
28 satisfying for some of their healthcare needs; and
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- 30 Whereas, Since the means are available for patient care in these situations, physicians and
31 others should be paid for their services when using such telemedicine technology; and
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- 33 Whereas, Telemedicine has become an effective tool in reducing inappropriate use of
34 emergency room and ambulance services for evaluation of acute illness and this is especially
35 true during the Covid-19 pandemic; therefore be it

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1 RESOLVED, That, with the expanded use of telemedicine during the Covid-19 pandemic, our
2 American Medical Association continue to advocate for a continuation of coverage for the full-
3 spectrum of technologies that were made available during the pandemic and that physicians be
4 reimbursed by government and private payers for time and complexity (Directive to Take
5 Action); and be it further
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7 RESOLVED, That our AMA advocate that the current emergency regulations for improved
8 access to and payment for telemedicine services be made permanent with respect to payment
9 parity and use of commonly accessible devices for connecting physicians and patients, without
10 reference to the originating site, while ensuring qualifications of duly licensed physicians to
11 provide such services in a secure environment (Directive to Take Action); and be it further
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13 RESOLVED, That our AMA propose that all insurance carriers provide coverage for
14 telemedicine visits with any physician licensed and registered to practice in the United States.
15 (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Modest - between \$1,000 - \$5,000

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