



Louisiana Department of Health
Informational Bulletin 20-11
Revised January 10, 2023

Due to the COVID-19 emergency declaration, temporary changes in provider policy and managed care practices are reflected herein to respond to the emergency. All other non-COVID-19 related policy remains in effect and shall be followed.

Teledentistry During the COVID-19 Declared Emergency

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) acknowledges the need for the continued emergency dental care for patients during the COVID-19 declared emergency. While some services will continue to be performed in dental offices, LDH recognizes that beneficiaries would be best served when telecommunication technology can be leveraged to support dental care.

Effective for dates of service on or after **March 23, 2020**, dentists may be reimbursed for the use of teledentistry, when appropriate, for rendering emergency dental services. *Teledentistry may not be used for outgoing or “check-in calls” with beneficiaries.*

CDT Codes

Telecommunication technology can be used to triage patients or offer an evaluation to determine if the situation is urgent or emergent. The allowable CDT codes are listed below.

D0140 limited oral evaluation – problem focused

An evaluation limited to a specific oral health problem or complaint. This may require interpretation of information acquired through additional diagnostic procedures. Report additional diagnostic procedures separately. Definitive procedures may be required on the same date as the evaluation. Typically, patients receiving this type of evaluation present with a specific problem and/or dental emergencies, trauma, acute infections, etc.

D9995 teledentistry – synchronous; real-time encounter

Reimbursement

Reimbursement for services delivered through teledentistry is at the same level as reimbursement for in-person services.

Billing Instructions [non-Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)/Rural Health Center (RHC)]

When providing services via teledentistry, D9995 must be reported in addition to D0140. Claim submissions must also be billed utilizing place of service (POS)/place of treatment code 02 or the claim will be denied.

If the teledentistry oral examination results in an in-person visit during the current COVID-19 declared emergency, the services rendered in the office should be coded and billed per the current policy.

Billing Instructions for FQHCs/RHCs

All dental services must be billed using the encounter code D0999 and must list the specific dental services provided by entering the procedure code D0140 and the teledentistry code (D9995) on the subsequent lines. The provider should also include zero or usual/customary charges for each service provided. Claim submissions must be billed utilizing place of service (POS)/place of treatment code 02 or the dental claim will be denied.

Reimbursement for these services in an FQHC/RHC will be at the all-inclusive prospective payment rate on file for the date of service. Follow-up procedures cannot be billed separately.

Permissible Telecommunications Systems

All services eligible for teledentistry may be delivered via an interactive audio/video telecommunications system. A secure, HIPAA-compliant platform is preferred, if available. However, for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, if a HIPAA-compliant system is not immediately available at the time it is needed, providers may use everyday communications technologies such as cellular phones with widely available audio/video communication software. The Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Health and Human Services maintains a list of software deemed appropriate for use during this event at:

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>.

Originating Site

The originating site refers to where the patient is located. There is currently no formal limitation on the originating site and this can include, but is not limited to, the patient's home.

Distant Site

The distant site refers to where the provider is located. The preferred location of a distant site provider is in a healthcare facility. However, if there is disruption to a healthcare facility or a risk to the personal health and safety of a provider, there is no formal limitation as to where the distant site provider can be located, as long as the same standard of care can be met.

Other Requirements

As always, providers must maintain the usual medical documentation to support reimbursement of the visit. In addition, providers must adhere to all teledentistry related requirements of their respective professional licensing boards.

For questions regarding this message and/or fee for service claims, please contact ~~DXC~~ Gainwell Provider Relations at (800) 473-2783 or (225) 924-5040. Questions regarding Dental Benefit Plan Manager claims should be directed to the beneficiary's dental plan. Contact DentaQuest Provider Relations at 1-800-508-6785 or MCNA Dental Provider Relations at 1-855-701-6262.