



The Hospital + Healthsystem
Association of Pennsylvania

Leading for Better Health

April 10, 2024

The Honorable Matt Bradford
Majority Leader
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
P.O. Box 202070
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070

The Honorable Joe Pittman
Majority Leader
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203041
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3041

The Honorable Bryan Cutler
Minority Leader
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
P.O. Box 202100
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2100

The Honorable Jay Costa
Minority Leader
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203043
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3043

Dear Leaders of the Pennsylvania General Assembly:

On behalf of more than 230 members of The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania, I write to express appreciation and support for the General Assembly's ongoing efforts to ensure that Pennsylvanians can rely on their insurers to pay for health care when they opt to receive it via telemedicine. The House's action to advance telemedicine legislation bolsters the Senate Health and Human Services Committee's previous good work on this matter. This is neither a Democrat v. Republican nor a Senate v. House issue. It touches all Pennsylvanians, and we urge you to work together to get a telemedicine bill across the finish line this session.

Pennsylvania's health care workforce shortage is among the most persistent and severe in the nation. Pennsylvania's rural continuum of care is in crisis. The need to connect Pennsylvanians with well-qualified mental health care has never been greater. Transportation services for seniors, people with disabilities, and others are stressed to the breaking point. Technology is ubiquitous and advancing every day. These are just a few of the compelling reasons to act now.

Medical standards of care exist to ensure quality and safety in every treatment setting. Telemedicine does not change what care is available, it simply provides patients with more flexibility about when, how, and where to receive it. No Pennsylvanian would be required to receive care via telemedicine, but—increasingly—many prefer it. Data shows that many patients better follow treatment plans and engage in more consistent provider relationships when telehealth is an option. Patients should be able to choose their preferred setting without worrying if their insurance will cover it.

We appreciate and support the intent of HB 1512 to require insurance coverage of telemedicine. We also have worked closely with stakeholders over several sessions to help craft SB 739, which considers a wider array of issues that arise within the complexities of the health care space—including respecting the health care provider's expertise to determine the appropriate course and delivery of treatment. We urge you to please work together to determine an effective path forward for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Heather Tyler
Vice President, State Advocacy

c: The Honorable Elder Vogel, The Honorable Christina Sappey