




Information Bulletin 01-20

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Deputy Secretary
Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

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Effective Date: Immediately

Subject: Use of telehealth for Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Services funded by the Single County Authority

On March 6, 2020, pursuant to the provisions of Subsection 7301(c) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7101, et seq., Governor Tom Wolf issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency related to the novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

During the term of this Disaster Emergency, Single County Authorities may use grant funds they have received from the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs for outpatient substance use disorder (SUD) treatment facilities to provide counseling and other clinical services using telehealth technology.

SUD Counselors who meet the qualifications provided in 28 Pa. Code § 704.7(b) are able to provide telehealth using real-time, two-way interactive audio-video transmission services in licensed Drug and Alcohol Outpatient clinics. While the two-way interactive transmission is the preferred method, services provided by telephone and in the home are also acceptable.

All federal and state privacy and confidentiality requirements applicable to in person services remain applicable to services provided through telehealth technology.

The ability to provide SCA-funded services through telehealth is consistent with the guidelines issued by Department of Human Services Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for delivering behavioral health services using telehealth technology in the Medicaid program. <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Documents/Coronavirus%202020/OMHSAS%20COVID-19%20Telehealth%20Expansion-%20Final%203.15.20.pdf>.

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