

Telehealth for Supportive Housing Providers

Guidance for Providers Looking to Adapt and Consider Billing for Themselves



Some supportive housing providers are already [billing Medicaid](#), while others are considering shifting services to Medicaid billing options. In both scenarios, the supportive housing field needs to consider both how to offer tenancy support services in a manner that considers our current public health emergency, as well as connecting their tenants to health care services that may be transitioning to more telehealth and telemedicine options. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), due to the national emergency and the public health emergency has [granted states great flexibility](#) in implementing, billing and maintaining telehealth options. COVID-19 has made connecting residents, especially vulnerable residents to telehealth even more important. The challenges and rewards of billing Medicaid for services remain and telehealth is no different. As for other services, providers will still need an electronic health record, adhere to state administrative regulations around staffing, develop contracts with managed care organizations or the state, and develop budgets based upon projected billable revenue. This brief provides definitions and resources to help supportive housing providers and Health Centers build their capacity and knowledge on how to speak the same language, collaborate effectively and leverage telehealth resources to support their service participants. Please refer to Telehealth Basics for guidance on residents and technology options. Each state will have its own regulations and guidance around telehealth and each provider will need to understand and follow state guidance. What follows are some general suggestions.

Basics of Telehealth

Most supportive housing providers offer a service known as case management. Here is a framework for considering telephonic case management:

	Tele-Case Management and Supportive Services
Description of Service	Telephonic case management is a widely used tool in psychosocial support and case management. This can be used as a complement to face-to-face services, but also as a service on its own.
Who provides this service?	Tele case management can be provided by a supportive housing case manager or health center care coordinator to ensure coordination of services and support.
What is the nature of the service?	Case management/tenancy support Consultation between members of the service participant's care coordination team (i.e. Assertive Community Treatment team, hospital discharge planning) Determining if the service participant has a physical health or behavioral health concern
Where is the service being provided?	This can be provided from any community based organization, health center, supportive housing provider, or managed care organization.
When	The service must be provided in real time (i.e. live). The service can be via text messaging as well.
How is the service being delivered?	Must find out what service participant's preferences are but mainly be via telephone.

Other Telephonic Service Options

Whenever engaging tenants via telehealth, supportive housing case managers need to determine the needs of the tenant (e.g. do they have food, medications, acute symptoms?). The supportive housing case manager can decide whether they can resolve the issues themselves, such as setting up a food service for the tenant, or setting up an appointment via telemedicine with a provider. If an appointment with a clinical or other service provider is needed, the case manager can “accompany” the tenant by a possible three-way conference call. Lastly, routine check-ins or “visits” via phone or another method of communication is critical between the case manager and tenant. The case manager should plan the calls with tenant and always end the call by scheduling the next call. This will ensure that the tenant feels supported, and it gives them a sense of routine and control in the situation.

More Information and Resources

[The Regional Telehealth Resource Center](#) provides technical assistance to organizations and individuals who are actively providing or interested in providing telehealth services to rural and/or underserved communities.

Additional Resources include:

1. The New England Journal of Medicine – [Telehealth Special Report](#), lists 9 key aspects of telehealth service delivery.
2. National Health Care for the Homeless Council [Telehealth Webinars, Guides, and Resources](#)
3. Verizon [Coronavirus FAQs](#)
4. AT&T [COVID-19: Our Response](#)