

HOME HEALTH TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Last Updated: May 15, 2020

Overview:

The bulletin pertains specifically to Highmark Health Options home health providers. In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, Highmark Health Options is temporarily expanding its telehealth policies to broaden access to telehealth services. Highmark Health Options will reimburse telehealth services provided by home health agencies. Coverage limitations will apply.

Coverage Limitations and Exclusions:

		Telehealth (Virtual)	Telephonic
		Covered	Non-Covered
Home Health Aide and Attendant Services			
G0156*	Services of home health/hospice aide in home health or hospice settings, each 15 minutes		✓
S5130	Homemaker service, nos; per 15 minutes		✓
Skilled Nursing Services			
G0299*	Direct skilled nursing services of a registered nurse (RN) in the home health or hospice setting, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
G0300*	Direct skilled nursing services of a licensed practical nurse (LPN) in the home health or hospice setting, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
Nursing Assessments			
G0493	Skilled services of a registered nurse (RN) for the observation and assessment of the patient's condition, each 15 minutes		✓
Private Duty Nursing			
S9123	Nursing care, in the home; by registered nurse, per hour		✓
S9124	Nursing care, in the home; by licensed practical nurse, per hour		✓
Therapy Services			
G0151	Services performed by a qualified physical therapist in the home health or hospice setting, each 15 minutes	✓	✓

G0152	Services performed by a qualified occupational therapist in the home health or hospice setting, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
G0153	Services performed by a qualified speech-language pathologist in the home health or hospice setting, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
G0159	Services performed by a qualified physical therapist, in the home health setting, in the establishment or delivery of a safe and effective physical therapy maintenance program, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
G0160	Services performed by a qualified occupational therapist, in the home health setting, in the establishment or delivery of a safe and effective occupational therapy maintenance program, each 15 minutes	✓	✓
G0161	Services performed by a qualified speech-language pathologist, in the home health setting, in the establishment or delivery of a safe and effective speech-language pathology maintenance program, each 15 minutes	✓	✓

*G0156- Home Health Aide Services provided virtually and/or telephonically will not be reimbursed as services typically require hands-on ADL assistance. If there is a circumstance where the ordering provider agrees, prior authorization will need to be obtained and approved for a virtual telehealth visit.

* G0299/G0300- Telehealth skilled nursing services are reimbursable if a member qualifies for appropriate preventive and rehabilitative nursing procedures. An in-person home health visit must be provided between telehealth visits. Example: A supported virtual visit where the caregiver would be given instructions on how to perform a task.

Additional information:

- Highmark Health Options will not reimburse providers for telephonic PT/OT/ST visits completed over the telephone. PT/OT/ST visits must be completed virtually via an interactive telecommunications system.
- As stated in the CARES Act, Telemedicine cannot take the place of ordered in-person visits. A Start of Care assessment should be done in person to establish a home health episode. If deemed appropriate by the home health agency, an observational-only recertification assessment may be performed through a virtual visit.
- The use of Skype or FaceTime, for telehealth treatment or diagnosis purposes during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency is permitted when deemed appropriate using the provider's medical judgment and delivered within the definition of the code billed.
- **Exclusion:** Supervisory visits, as part of the homecare plan, may be performed virtually or telephonically. This is not a separately billable service but is inclusive of the service.

Providers are responsible for ensuring the submission accurate claims in accordance with Highmark Health Options reimbursement policies.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members.

For more information on the latest Highmark Health Options COVID-19 related resources, visit www.HighmarkHealthOptions.com.