

Proposed Funding Cuts to Telehealth Will Reduce Access to Care for Patients

The Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Expansion Act (S. 2840) would cut hospital reimbursements by eliminating facility fees for telehealth services. The expansion of telehealth over the past few years has transformed health care delivery, improved access for millions of Americans, and increased convenience for patients. Given the current health care challenges across sites of care – including major clinician shortages – telehealth holds tremendous potential to support patient care, especially in rural and other underserved areas. Unfortunately, this bill would undermine these advancements in care by reducing access to telehealth services for patients.

Facility fees help cover both direct and indirect telehealth costs, allowing a hospital to continue to provide services to patients and serve the needs of their community. The proposed elimination of these fees for telehealth visits will further limit administration of virtual services for patients and communities.

Facility fees pay for:



Nurses



Patient education and clinician training



Upfront and ongoing costs of establishing and maintaining a virtual infrastructure



Secure platforms that are HIPAA-compliant



Software Licenses



IT Support



Language interpreters

AHA Take: We urge Congress to oppose eliminating facility fees for telehealth services, which would reduce access to care for patients.



Advancing Health in America