

By: Price, Coleman, et al.

H.B. No. 2697

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 2697:

By: Price

C.S.H.B. No. 2697

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to telemedicine and telehealth services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 111.001, Occupations Code, is amended by amending Subdivision (2) and adding Subdivisions (3) and (4) to read as follows:

(2) "Store and forward technology" means technology that stores and transmits or grants access to a person's clinical information for review by a health professional at a different physical location than the person.

(3) "Telehealth service" means a health service, other than a telemedicine medical service, delivered by a health professional licensed, certified, or otherwise entitled to practice in this state and acting within the scope of the health professional's license, certification, or entitlement to a patient at a different physical location than the health professional using telecommunications or information technology.

(4) "Telemedicine [~~and~~ "~~telemedicine~~] medical service" means a health care service delivered by a physician licensed in this state, or a health professional acting under the delegation and supervision of a physician licensed in this state, and acting within the scope of the physician's or health professional's license to a patient at a different physical location than the physician or health professional using

1 telecommunications or information technology ~~[have the meanings~~
2 ~~assigned by Section 57.042, Utilities Code].~~

3 SECTION 2. Section 111.004, Occupations Code, is amended to
4 read as follows:

5 Sec. 111.004. RULES. The Texas ~~[State Board of]~~ Medical
6 Board ~~[Examiners]~~, in consultation with the commissioner of
7 insurance, as appropriate, may adopt rules necessary to:

8 (1) ensure that patients using telemedicine medical
9 services receive appropriate, quality care;

10 (2) prevent abuse and fraud in the use of telemedicine
11 medical services, including rules relating to the filing of claims
12 and records required to be maintained in connection with
13 telemedicine medical services;

14 (3) ensure adequate supervision of health
15 professionals who are not physicians and who provide telemedicine
16 medical services; and

17 (4) establish the maximum number of health
18 professionals who are not physicians that a physician may supervise
19 through a telemedicine medical service~~[, and~~

20 ~~[(5) require a face-to-face consultation between a~~
21 ~~patient and a physician providing a telemedicine medical service~~
22 ~~within a certain number of days following an initial telemedicine~~
23 ~~medical service only if the physician has never seen the patient].~~

24 SECTION 3. Chapter 111, Occupations Code, is amended by
25 adding Sections 111.005 through 111.008 to read as follows:

26 Sec. 111.005. PRACTITIONER-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP FOR
27 TELEMEDICINE MEDICAL SERVICES. (a) For purposes of Section

1 562.056, a valid practitioner-patient relationship is present
2 between a practitioner providing a telemedicine medical service and
3 a patient receiving the telemedicine medical service as long as the
4 practitioner complies with the standard of care described in
5 Section 111.007 and the practitioner:

6 (1) has a preexisting practitioner-patient
7 relationship with the patient established in accordance with rules
8 adopted under Section 111.006;

9 (2) communicates, regardless of the method of
10 communication, with the patient pursuant to a call coverage
11 agreement established in accordance with Texas Medical Board rules
12 with a physician requesting coverage of medical care for the
13 patient; or

14 (3) provides the telemedicine medical services
15 through the use of one of the following methods, as long as the
16 practitioner complies with the follow-up requirements in
17 Subsection (b), and the method allows the practitioner to have
18 access to, and the practitioner uses, the relevant clinical
19 information that would be required in accordance with the standard
20 of care described in Section 111.007:

21 (A) synchronous audiovisual interaction between
22 the practitioner and the patient in another location;

23 (B) asynchronous store and forward technology,
24 including asynchronous store and forward technology in conjunction
25 with synchronous audio interaction between the practitioner and the
26 patient in another location, as long as the practitioner uses
27 clinical information from:

1 (i) clinically relevant photographic or
2 video images, including diagnostic images; or

3 (ii) the patient's relevant medical
4 records, such as the relevant medical history, laboratory and
5 pathology results, and prescriptive histories; or

6 (C) another form of audiovisual
7 telecommunication technology that allows the practitioner to
8 comply with the standard of care described in Section 111.007.

9 (b) A practitioner who provides telemedicine medical
10 services to a patient as described in Subsection (a)(3) shall:

11 (1) provide the patient with guidance on appropriate
12 follow-up care; and

13 (2) if the patient consents and the patient has a
14 primary care physician, provide to the patient's primary care
15 physician within 72 hours after the practitioner provides the
16 services to the patient a medical record or other report containing
17 an explanation of the treatment provided by the practitioner to the
18 patient and the practitioner's evaluation, analysis, or diagnosis,
19 as appropriate, of the patient's condition.

20 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a
21 practitioner-patient relationship is not present if a practitioner
22 prescribes an abortifacient or any other drug or device that
23 terminates a pregnancy.

24 Sec. 111.006. COORDINATION TO ADOPT RULES THAT DETERMINE
25 VALID PRESCRIPTION. (a) The Texas Medical Board, the Texas Board
26 of Nursing, the Texas Physician Assistant Board, and the Texas
27 State Board of Pharmacy shall jointly adopt rules that establish

1 the determination of a valid prescription in accordance with
2 Section 111.005. Rules adopted under this section must allow for
3 the establishment of a practitioner-patient relationship by a
4 telemedicine medical service provided by a practitioner to a
5 patient in a manner that complies with Section 111.005(a)(3).

6 (b) The Texas Medical Board, the Texas Board of Nursing, the
7 Texas Physician Assistant Board, and the Texas State Board of
8 Pharmacy shall jointly develop and publish on each respective
9 board's Internet website responses to frequently asked questions
10 relating to the determination of a valid prescription issued in the
11 course of the provision of telemedicine medical services.

12 Sec. 111.007. STANDARD OF CARE FOR TELEMEDICINE MEDICAL
13 SERVICES AND TELEHEALTH SERVICES. (a) A health professional
14 providing a health care service or procedure as a telemedicine
15 medical service or a telehealth service is subject to the standard
16 of care that would apply to the provision of the same health care
17 service or procedure in an in-person setting.

18 (b) An agency with regulatory authority over a health
19 professional may not adopt rules pertaining to telemedicine medical
20 services or telehealth services that would impose a higher standard
21 of care than the standard described in Subsection (a).

22 Sec. 111.008. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES EXCLUDED. This
23 chapter does not apply to mental health services.

24 SECTION 4. Section 562.056, Occupations Code, is amended by
25 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

26 (c) For purposes of this section, a valid
27 practitioner-patient relationship is present between a

1 practitioner providing telemedicine medical services and the
2 patient receiving the telemedicine medical services if the
3 practitioner has complied with the requirements for establishing
4 such a relationship in accordance with Section 111.005.

5 SECTION 5. Section 1455.001(3), Insurance Code, is amended
6 to read as follows:

7 (3) "Telehealth service" and "telemedicine medical
8 service" have the meanings assigned by Section 111.001 [~~57.042~~],
9 Occupations [~~Utilities~~] Code.

10 SECTION 6. Section 1455.004, Insurance Code, is amended to
11 read as follows:

12 Sec. 1455.004. COVERAGE FOR TELEMEDICINE MEDICAL SERVICES
13 AND TELEHEALTH SERVICES. (a) A health benefit plan may not exclude
14 from coverage a covered health care service or procedure delivered
15 by a preferred or contracted health professional to a covered
16 patient as a telemedicine medical service or a telehealth service
17 [~~from coverage under the plan~~] solely because the covered health
18 care service or procedure is not provided through an in-person [~~a~~
19 ~~face-to-face~~] consultation.

20 (b) A health benefit plan may require a deductible, a
21 copayment, or coinsurance for a covered health care service or
22 procedure delivered by a preferred or contracted health
23 professional to a covered patient as a telemedicine medical service
24 or a telehealth service. The amount of the deductible, copayment,
25 or coinsurance may not exceed the amount of the deductible,
26 copayment, or coinsurance required for the covered health care [~~a~~
27 ~~comparable medical~~] service or procedure provided through an

1 in-person [~~a face-to-face~~] consultation.

2 (c) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a health benefit plan
3 is not required to provide coverage for a telemedicine medical
4 service or a telehealth service provided by only synchronous or
5 asynchronous audio interaction, including:

6 (1) an audio-only telephone consultation;

7 (2) a text-only e-mail message; or

8 (3) a facsimile transmission.

9 SECTION 7. Chapter 1455, Insurance Code, is amended by
10 adding Section 1455.006 to read as follows:

11 Sec. 1455.006. TELEMEDICINE MEDICAL SERVICES AND
12 TELEHEALTH SERVICES STATEMENT. (a) Each issuer of a health
13 benefit plan shall adopt and display in a conspicuous manner on the
14 health benefit plan issuer's Internet website the issuer's policies
15 and payment practices for telemedicine medical services and
16 telehealth services.

17 (b) This section does not require an issuer of a health
18 benefit plan to display negotiated contract payment rates for
19 health professionals who contract with the issuer to provide
20 telemedicine medical services or telehealth services.

21 SECTION 8. Sections 531.001(7) and (8), Government Code,
22 are amended to read as follows:

23 (7) "Telehealth service" has the meaning assigned by
24 Section 111.001, Occupations Code [~~means a health service, other~~
25 than a telemedicine medical service, that is delivered by a
26 licensed or certified health professional acting within the scope
27 of the health professional's license or certification who does not

1 ~~perform a telemedicine medical service and that requires the use of~~
2 ~~advanced telecommunications technology, other than telephone or~~
3 ~~facsimile technology, including:~~

4 ~~[(A) compressed digital interactive video,~~
5 ~~audio, or data transmission,~~

6 ~~[(B) clinical data transmission using computer~~
7 ~~imaging by way of still-image capture and store and forward, and~~

8 ~~[(C) other technology that facilitates access to~~
9 ~~health care services or medical specialty expertise].~~

10 (8) "Telemedicine medical service" has the meaning
11 assigned by Section 111.001, Occupations Code ~~[means a health care~~
12 ~~service that is initiated by a physician or provided by a health~~
13 ~~professional acting under physician delegation and supervision,~~
14 ~~that is provided for purposes of patient assessment by a health~~
15 ~~professional, diagnosis or consultation by a physician, or~~
16 ~~treatment, or for the transfer of medical data, and that requires~~
17 ~~the use of advanced telecommunications technology, other than~~
18 ~~telephone or facsimile technology, including:~~

19 ~~[(A) compressed digital interactive video,~~
20 ~~audio, or data transmission,~~

21 ~~[(B) clinical data transmission using computer~~
22 ~~imaging by way of still-image capture and store and forward, and~~

23 ~~[(C) other technology that facilitates access to~~
24 ~~health care services or medical specialty expertise].~~

25 SECTION 9. Section 531.0216(b), Government Code, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 (b) In developing the system, the executive commissioner by

1 rule shall:

2 (1) review programs and pilot projects in other states
3 to determine the most effective method for reimbursement;

4 (2) establish billing codes and a fee schedule for
5 services;

6 (3) ~~[provide for an approval process before a provider
7 can receive reimbursement for services;~~

8 ~~[(4)]~~ consult with the Department of State Health
9 Services to establish procedures to:

10 (A) identify clinical evidence supporting
11 delivery of health care services using a telecommunications system;
12 and

13 (B) annually review health care services,
14 considering new clinical findings, to determine whether
15 reimbursement for particular services should be denied or
16 authorized;

17 (4) ~~[(5)]~~ establish a separate provider identifier
18 for telemedicine medical services providers, telehealth services
19 providers, and home telemonitoring services providers; and

20 (5) ~~[(6)]~~ establish a separate modifier for
21 telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, and home
22 telemonitoring services eligible for reimbursement.

23 SECTION 10. Sections [531.0217\(c-1\)](#) and (i), Government
24 Code, are amended to read as follows:

25 (c-1) Notwithstanding Subsection (b) or (c), the commission
26 shall provide for reimbursement under Medicaid for an office visit
27 provided through telemedicine by a physician who is assessing and

1 evaluating the patient from a distant site if [~~+~~

2 [~~(1) a health professional acting under the delegation~~
3 ~~and supervision of that physician is present with the patient at the~~
4 ~~time of the visit; and~~

5 [~~(2)~~] the medical condition, illness, or injury for
6 which the patient is receiving the service is not likely, within a
7 reasonable degree of medical certainty, to undergo material
8 deterioration within the 30-day period following the date of the
9 visit.

10 (i) The Texas Medical Board, in consultation with the
11 commission, as appropriate, may adopt rules as necessary to:

12 (1) ensure that appropriate care, including quality of
13 care, is provided to patients who receive telemedicine medical
14 services; and

15 (2) prevent abuse and fraud through the use of
16 telemedicine medical services, including rules relating to filing
17 of claims and records required to be maintained in connection with
18 telemedicine[~~, and~~

19 [~~(3) define those situations when a face-to-face~~
20 ~~consultation with a physician is required after a telemedicine~~
21 ~~medical service].~~

22 SECTION 11. Section 771.151(7), Health and Safety Code, is
23 amended to read as follows:

24 (7) "Telemedicine medical service" has the meaning
25 assigned by Section 111.001, Occupations Code [~~means a health care~~
26 ~~service that is initiated by a physician or provided by a health~~
27 ~~professional acting under physician delegation and supervision,~~

1 ~~that is provided for purposes of patient assessment by a health~~
2 ~~professional, diagnosis or consultation by a physician, or~~
3 ~~treatment, or for the transfer of medical data, and that requires~~
4 ~~the use of advanced telecommunications technology, other than~~
5 ~~telephone or facsimile technology, including:~~

6 ~~[(A) compressed digital interactive video,~~
7 ~~audio, or data transmission,~~

8 ~~[(B) clinical data transmission using computer~~
9 ~~imaging by way of still-image capture and store and forward; and~~

10 ~~[(C) other technology that facilitates access to~~
11 ~~health care services or medical specialty expertise].~~

12 SECTION 12. Sections [531.02163](#) and [531.0217\(i-1\)](#),
13 Government Code, are repealed.

14 SECTION 13. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of
15 this section, this Act takes effect immediately if it receives a
16 vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
17 provided by Section [39](#), Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

20 (b) Sections [1455.001\(3\)](#) and [1455.004](#), Insurance Code, as
21 amended by this Act, and Section [1455.006](#), Insurance Code, as added
22 by this Act, take effect January 1, 2018.