

2018 PGIP Fact Sheet

Telehealth Initiative

Overview

Telehealth is an umbrella term regarding the use of technology to facilitate the delivery of health care services. Telehealth is widely regarded as a promising tool for providing increased access to health care services, because it eliminates traditional barriers to accessing those services, such as geography and transportation. Telehealth encompasses related concepts such as *telemedicine*, *online visits*, and *telemonitoring*. The PGIP Telehealth Initiative began in April 2017.

Background

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network have reimbursed for telehealth services for years. The Blue Cross and BCN Medical policy areas currently have policies related to both telemedicine and e-visits, and broadly state that “the safety and effectiveness of telemedicine has been established. It may be considered a useful diagnostic and therapeutic option when indicated.” Primary care physicians as well as specialist physicians are eligible to deliver telehealth services.

Blue Cross has recently engaged in a program with telehealth vendor American Well® for the provision of online patient visits to customer groups who wish to provide that service to their employees. American Well is specifically contracted to provide real-time 24/7 online visits for Blue Cross and BCN patients. Blue Cross provides information about available telehealth platforms to Physician Organizations, including the American Well platform and others that are currently available.

Goals and objectives

The goal of the PGIP Telehealth Initiative is to catalyze providers to deliver telemedicine services to their patients. Physician Group Incentive Program providers, particularly those who are PCMH-designated or engaged in implementing PCMH capabilities, are uniquely well-positioned to deliver these services, because they have been implementing PCMH capabilities and therefore have the tools and resources that facilitate successful implementation of telehealth.

Incentive design

Currently, there are two ways POs can receive payment for Telehealth:

1. Active participation in the PGIP Telehealth workgroup (one representative per PO)
2. Telehealth start-up funding. This funding is provided to POs who submit an action plan detailing their project status, plans for implementation, and how they will define success.

Participation criteria

Physician Organizations that participate in PGIP may participate in the Telehealth Initiative.

Evaluation

The PGIP Telehealth Initiative will be evaluated annually to assess the usefulness of the initiative's incentive metric(s) and impact. To conduct an annual assessment, Value Partnerships will examine specific short-term and intermediate measures to evaluate PO and practice unit activities and participation, any behavioral and knowledge changes on behalf of practice units and POs, and impact on reported performance metrics. The annual evaluation is intended to provide insight into the effectiveness of the designed Initiative and payment metrics.

Results

Because the PGIP Telehealth Initiative started in 2017, there are no evaluation results to date. Results will be forthcoming later.

For additional information about this initiative contact:

Lisa Rajt, Health Care Manager, Value Partnerships, BCBSM at lrajt@bcbsm.com.

About Value Partnerships

Over a decade of innovation, Value Partnerships is a collection of clinically-oriented initiatives among Michigan physicians, hospitals, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan that are improving clinical quality, reducing health complications, controlling cost trends, eliminating errors, and improving healthcare outcomes throughout Michigan.

About PGIP

PGIP, a BCBSM **Value Partnerships** program, encourages, and rewards practitioners to more effectively manage patient populations and build an infrastructure to more robustly measure and monitor care quality. Over **40** Physician Organizations across the state of Michigan - representing nearly **20,000 primary care physicians and specialists** - are working together in PGIP to improve the delivery of healthcare for Michigan Blues members.

PGIP is cultivating a healthier future for all Michigan residents by catalyzing an all-payer system. Patients throughout the state, regardless of payer, benefit from improved care processes developed in the PGIP provider community.

For additional information about PGIP:

Send an email to valuepartnerships@bcbsm.com.

Visit our website at www.valuepartnerships.com.

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