

## **COVID-19 telephonic communication services**

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York (Highmark BCBSWNY) partners with Amerigroup companies to administer certain services to Medicaid Managed Care (MMC) and Child Health Plus (CHPlus) members. Please note, this information is specific to the MMC and CHPlus programs only.

Effective for dates of service on or after March 13, 2020, during the current State of Emergency only, Highmark BCBSWNY will reimburse telephonic evaluation and management services to members in cases where face-to-face visits are not recommended and it is medically appropriate for the member to be evaluated and managed by telephone. This guidance from New York State is to support the policy that patients should be treated through telehealth, including telephonically, wherever possible to avoid member congregation with potentially sick patients. Telehealth will be covered for all appropriate services for all patients appropriate to treat through this modality. However, telephonic services are only to be rendered for the care of established patients or the legal guardian of an established patient.

**Telephonic evaluation and management services must be provided by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or licensed midwife actively enrolled in fee-for-service (FFS) Medicaid and with Highmark BCBSWNY.**

If the telephone call follows a clinic/office visit performed and reported within the past seven calendar days for the same diagnosis, then the telephone services are considered part of the previous clinic/office visit and should not be billed separately.

However, if a face-to-face visit is not possible due to the State of Emergency, practitioners should assess if a telephonic visit is clinically appropriate to properly care for the patient. In such instances, those visits documented as clinically appropriate by the provider would be considered medically necessary for payment purposes. All other requirements in delivery of these services otherwise apply.

Clinics, including Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), billing the prospective payment system (PPS) rate should bill telephonic evaluation and management services as ordered ambulatory.

Relevant CPT codes are:

- 99441 — Telephone evaluation and management service; 5-10 minutes of medical discussion
- 99442 — 11-20 minutes of medical discussion
- 99443 — 21-30 minutes of medical discussion

**<https://providerpublic.mybcbswny.com>**

Amerigroup Partnership Plan, LLC provides management services for Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York's managed Medicaid. Amerigroup Partnership Plan, LLC brinda servicios administrativos para Medicaid administrado de Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York.

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