

Dear Insurance Company CEO/Medicaid Director:

I am writing in response to the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) announcement that the coronavirus, COVID-19, is now an epidemic in the United States and the effort is underway to limit its community spread. **I am requesting that, during this temporary public health crisis, your company would permit psychiatric services to be provided via telemedicine and or via telephone using the established CPT codes commonly used during in-person care.**

As a psychiatrist who specializes in mental health, including substance use disorders, I am concerned about continued access to treatment during this period when patients are being advised to limit their interactions with the community at large to help mitigate the health crisis. With the spread of the virus, and the CDC's current guidelines to slow that spread, access to vital psychiatric care will now be limited to an even greater proportion of the population, at large. This is especially problematic for mental health care, since many patients already undergoing treatment will have diagnoses and symptoms that can be exacerbated.

Please help me to continue to provide needed psychiatric care to my patients.

Sincerely,