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**AMERICAN TELEMEDICINE ASSOCIATION AND TELEHEALTH INDUSTRY GROUPS URGE CONGRESS TO INCLUDE TELEHEALTH IN YEAR-END PACKAGE, EXTENDING FLEXIBILITIES THROUGH 2021**

WASHINGTON, DC, DECEMBER 14, 2020 -- The [American Telemedicine Association](#) (ATA) was joined by healthcare industry organizations in applauding Congress for its recent steps to increase access to telehealth during the public health emergency, and expressed support for provisions, proposed by a bipartisan group of Senators, that would extend temporary telehealth flexibilities through the end of 2021 as part of a end-of-year package to fund the federal government. This action will help provide certainty for patients and providers, while work continues to secure permanent reform in 2021.

“There is no time like the present for passing needed common sense permanent reform to ensure telehealth services remain a lifeline for millions of Americans in rural and underserved communities after the public health emergency is rescinded,” said Ann Mond Johnson, CEO, the ATA. “Absent the timely enactment of permanent policies, we urge Congress to extend these temporary flexibilities for as long as possible, to at least provide one year of certainty and enable patients to continue to receive care when and where they need it.”

In [a joint letter to Congressional leaders](#) dated December 11, 2020, telehealth industry groups called for the following flexibilities be extended until the end of next calendar year: removing geographic restrictions; allowing the location of the patient (including the patient’s home) to be an originating site; giving HHS the authority to determine appropriate telehealth services and providers; and allowing Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, and Critical Access Hospitals to furnish telehealth and be fairly reimbursed.

“... the continued risk of telehealth flexibilities ending with each subsequent 90-day renewal of the PHE adds additional uncertainty to an already strained health care delivery system. Patients and their health care professionals should not have to worry if they will be able to continue to receive or deliver necessary care,” according to the letter signed by the ATA, Alliance for Connected Care, College of Healthcare Information Management Executives, Connected Health Initiative, eHealth Initiative, Health Innovation Alliance, HIMSS, and PCHAlliance.

**About the ATA**

As the only organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, the [ATA](#) is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and appropriate care when and where they need it, enabling the system to do more good for more people. ATA represents a broad and inclusive member network of technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide education and resources to help integrate virtual care into emerging value-based delivery models. [@americantelemed](#) [#gotelehealth](#) [#ATApolicy](#)

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