

Remote Visits Using Telecommunication Technology – Hospice

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued temporary amendments to the regulations to allow the use of telecommunications technology in conjunction with home visits. The use of telecommunications technology must be related to the services being furnished and must be included on the plan of care, along with a description of how it will help to achieve the goals on the plan of care, without serving as a substitute for a visit ordered on the plan of care. More details and background information can be found in the [Interim Final Rule CMS-1744-IFC](#), specifically, in Section H (pg. 72).

What to Consider for Remote Visits

- Would this patient benefit from services furnished via a telecommunications system, in addition to in-person home visits?
- Will the remote visits optimize the skilled services being furnished by the nurse, social worker, or chaplain during the in-person home visit?
- Will the patient and physician agree to remote visits?

Steps to Take for Remote Visits

- Obtain consent from the patient for remote visits
- Develop the plan of care (POC) with the physician and the patient and identify care, treatment and services that may be provided safely and effectively through remote monitoring. Include an overall goal for telecommunications (i.e., the patient will be involved and compliant with the plan of care as a result of remote visits using telecommunication technology)
- Ensure physician orders specify remote visits using telecommunications technology to include-
 - Technology to be used, i.e., FaceTime, Skype, or a specific specialized telemonitoring software
 - Frequency/duration of remote visits
 - The specific discipline and care and/or treatment to be provided
 - Goal for the remote visit
- Document the remote visit using telecommunications technology to include
 - Type of technology used
 - Specific care, treatment, service provided
 - Patient and/or caregiver response
 - Follow-up plans
 - Progression toward goals on POC
 - Date/time of remote visit
 - Signature of clinician

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Plan of Care: Below is an example of plan of care worksheet for remote visits. Each agency should customize the plan of care to the patient, the care ordered, and the goals of the care.

Patient Name: _____ MR#: _____

- Telecommunications will be provided using
 - FaceTime
 - Skype
 - _____ (name of app)
- Telemonitoring will be made through remote care monitoring using specialized telemonitoring software- _____ (name of software)

Telecommunication services will be provided by:

(recommend range of frequency, for example 2-3 times/week)

- Nursing _____ (freq) X _____ (duration)
- MSW _____ (freq) X _____ (duration)
- Spiritual Counselor/Chaplain _____ (freq) X _____ (duration)

Nursing to provide the following services via telecommunication technology:

- Assess patient reported BP, weight and O₂ sat in relation to COPD. Monitor COPD for s/s exacerbation or potential exacerbation. Report to physician any s/s identifying patient distress. Provide education on disease process and treatment regime.
- Monitor level of pain and provide education on pain management. Report to the physician if pain > 8 on a 1 – 10 scale is not resolved with treatment options.
- Assess comfort level.
- Assess medication management through review and reconciliation of all medications and provide education on identified knowledge or use deficits.
- Assess nutrition/hydration status and provide dietary counseling for identified needs.
- Observe patient or caregiver changing wound dressing when 2-way technology is available. Assess wound for s/s of healing. Report to physician any s/s of non-healing or infection.
- Other specific orders provided via telecommunication _____

GOAL:

- Telecommunication goal- Patient will be involved and compliant with plan of care resulting in decreased hospital and/or emergency department visits as result of telecommunications.
- Patient will achieve optimum comfort level.
- Other _____

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Patient Name: _____ MR#: _____

Medical Social Worker to provide the following services via telecommunication technology:

- Psychosocial assessment
- Crisis intervention
- Long-range planning and decision making
- Community resource planning and outreach
- Determine/locate alternative placement
- Financial counseling and/or referrals
- Counseling regarding family coping

MSW GOAL:

- Patient will be provided with-
 - Appropriate community resource referrals
 - Financial resources
 - Stable placement setting
- Improved patient/family coping
- Other _____

Chaplain to provide the following services via telecommunication technology:

- Spiritual support
- Spiritual assessment
- Crisis intervention

Chaplain GOAL:

- Patient will be provided with-
 - Appropriate spiritual counseling
- Improved patient/family coping
- Other _____

Medical Provider to provide the following services via telecommunication technology:

- Symptom management
- Face-to-face visit

Medical Provider GOAL:

- Symptoms will be well controlled
- Face-to-face visit will be safely provided

Signature _____ Date _____ Time _____