

Chris O'Brien

From: Barreto, Steven <steven_barreto@brown.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:17 AM
To: Chris O'Brien
Subject: I strongly urge you to vote FOR House Bill 7171

Dear Members of the House,

I am a clinical psychologist working for Lifespan (LPG) Adult Outpatient Psychiatry and who specializes in family and couple therapy. I have been practicing for over 25 years. I am also a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine of the Warren Alpert (Brown University) Medical School. Telemedicine has been a tremendous benefit for my patients, particularly working families. It has allowed for continuity of care for families and couples during this crisis, many of whom have children, teenagers or young adults living at home with serious emotional disturbance or behavior disorders, including anxiety and depression. Additionally I work with many families who struggle with at least one family member's chronic illness which limits the family's mobility.

As a testament to the health benefit of remote video, ALMOST ALL OF MY PATIENTS have asked me to continue with the remote video model indefinitely.

I believe that now is the time that remote telemedicine should become a permanent care model with comparable payment to in-person patient care. Because many of these families have found it easier to organize their work and childcare responsibilities around remote telehealth visits, it would be a tremendous hardship on them, were the system to return to it's previous lack of parity, forcing these families to return to in person care.

I strongly urge you to vote FOR House Bill 7171, which extends and supports the current Executive Order mandating that the invaluable tool of telemedicine (via both telephone and video) be reimbursed at rates equivalent to in-person care. Please let us continue to use this valuable tool.

Sincerely,

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<https://www.lifespan.org/centers-services/family-therapy-program>
<https://vivo.brown.edu/display/sbarreto>