Template: Clinician Letter to Governor/State Legislator on Telehealth Coverage and Parity

(Use this template to contact your governor, Medicaid director, or state legislator. Insert the applicable information in brackets and create a letter to mail or email to the appropriate office.)

REMINDER: DELETE THESE SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND ANY OTHER BRACKETED LANGUAGE BELOW PRIOR TO SUBMITTING YOUR LETTER.

[Date]

Re: Support Permanent Telehealth Policies, Including Coverage and Payment Parity for Medicaid, Workers’ Comp, and Private Payers

[Date]

Dear [Official Designation NAME]:

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced health care providers and payers to reconsider how care is delivered in order to reduce the risk of further spreading infection. Access to telehealth has become of paramount importance to ensure the safety of patients and their physical therapy providers. For the duration of this public health emergency, states and many private payers have created telehealth policies that have ensured access to the health care, including physical therapy, that patients need.

While telehealth has played a crucial role in providing needed care during the pandemic, it has become increasingly clear that its many benefits can be utilized well beyond the immediate COVID-19 health emergency. For patients who have difficulty leaving their homes without assistance, have underlying health conditions, lack transportation, or would need to travel long distances, the ability to access physical therapy via telehealth greatly reduces the burden on the patient and family when accessing care.

Telehealth is particularly well-suited for physical therapy, especially when used as an enhancement to services rather than exclusively as a replacement. Education and home exercise programs, including those focused on falls prevention, function particularly well with telehealth because the physical therapist is able to evaluate and treat the patient within the real-life context of their home environment, which is not easily replicable in the clinic. Patient and caregiver self-efficacy are inherent goals of care provided by physical therapists. A patient’s and/or caregiver’s ability to interact in their own environment with a therapist when they are facing a challenge, rather than waiting for the next appointment, can be invaluable in supporting the adoption of effective strategies to improve function, enhance safety, and promote engagement.

**As a resident of [STATE] and a [licensed physical therapist/licensed physical therapist assistant/physical therapy student], I urge you to support legislation or regulations that would PERMANENTLY allow all physical therapy providers to use telehealth as well as require coverage and reimbursement under Medicaid, Worker’s Compensation, and commercial plans to the same extent as for physical therapist services furnished in-person.**

**Thank you for your consideration.**

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR TITLE]