



# Legislation Introduced to Permanently Allow Access to Physical Therapist Services via Telehealth

*Continued Commitment to Providing Options for Patient Access to Care Remains of the Highest Importance to APTA Members and the Patients They Serve*

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**Alexandria, VA** — The American Physical Therapy Association supports new bipartisan legislation that would permanently allow physical therapist services delivered via telehealth to be covered under Medicare. The **Expanded Telehealth Access Act (H.R. 3875)**, adds physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and other therapy providers in private practice, as well as facility-based outpatient therapy providers under Medicare Part B, as permanently authorized providers of telehealth under Medicare. The bill is endorsed by APTA, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Alliance for Connected Care, and the American Occupational Therapy Association.

“The use of telehealth during the pandemic helped ensure patient access to physical therapist services and provided an option for therapy clinics and their patients,” said APTA President Roger Herr, PT, MPA. “The pandemic made it all the more clear just how valuable telehealth is to patients needing alternative access to therapy. It is critical that Congress make this option for therapy services permanent for Medicare patients. We applaud Reps. Mickie Sherrill and Diana Harshbarger for their leadership on this important bipartisan legislation.”

In late 2022, Congress approved the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which included a provision that extended Medicare’s temporary telehealth flexibilities for therapy until Dec. 31, 2024. The need for a permanent resolution on access to therapy services delivered under Medicare has become even more evident with the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ recent misinterpretation of Congress’s extension of telehealth to not cover certain facility-based therapy settings, ultimately causing chaos and uncertainty to patients and providers. Due in part to APTA advocacy, CMS has since clarified its position to include all facility-based therapy settings, but still only temporarily. H.R. 3875 would permanently allow telehealth to be covered under Medicare and would add PTs and PTAs as permanent authorized providers of telehealth services, regardless of setting.

Physical therapy provided via telehealth can improve access to care for patients who live in rural and underserved areas. It has allowed patients to gain desired outcomes for various health conditions. It is critical for Medicare patients to continue to have the option to see their medical providers via telehealth when medically appropriate.

APTA urges health care providers and the patients they serve to visit the [APTA Patient Action Center](#) and email their members of Congress to ask them to expand the use of physical therapy via telehealth by cosponsoring H.R. 3875.

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The American Physical Therapy Association represents more than 100,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and physical therapy students nationwide. Visit [apta.org](http://apta.org) to learn more.