



bodman Health Care Client Alert

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Telemedicine has Potential to Cut Costs, Improve Access if Implemented Properly

Technological advances have made telemedicine a more viable service model for certain clinical interactions. Telemedicine can reduce costs, improve health care access in rural areas, and address systemic gaps in emergency and other services.

Under a bill enacted in 2012, health plans are now allowed to cover and reimburse for telemedicine-provided services. In Michigan, telemedicine means the use of an electronic medium to link patients with health care professionals in different locations. The health care professional must be able to examine the patient via real-time, interactive audio or video, and the patient must be able to interact with the off-site health care professional. The health care professional must be licensed, registered, or otherwise authorized to engage the applicable health care profession in the state where the patient is located.

Yet many barriers remain, including payment and coverage challenges. In addition, to successfully implement, providers must select quality vendors and negotiate contracts with appropriate provisions. The process and products must be HIPAA compliant. Physicians must be appropriately licensed.

Bodman can provide guidance on this matter and others and help your organization review and develop policies and procedures that meet your needs and provide practical advice. If you would like to discuss these or any other legal issues affecting your organization, please contact the chair of our Health Care Law Group, Bill Shipman, at (313) 393-7562 or wshipman@bodmanlaw.com.

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