

ABHW Member Companies Respond to Behavioral Health Needs During COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

ABHW member companies have taken a wide range of actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency to help ensure that people with mental health and substance use disorders receive the care they need. As health plans are continuously updating their response to this public health emergency, ABHW has compiled selected actions that plans have taken to address the behavioral health of the people, and greater community, they serve. ABHW members are informing providers and individuals of the changes being made by providing information on their website and secure portals, communicating directly with providers, operating hotlines, and posting on social media.

Below is a selection of their services:



Aetna

Aetna is offering a \$0 copay for telemedicine visits until September 30, 2020. Costs will be waived for all telemedicine visits through:

- Teladoc options through the [Aetna Health app](#);
- Network providers who deliver virtual care, such as live video-conferencing; or
- Other non-public facing synchronous video chat delivered via **Skype® and FaceTime®** if allowed in their states and they are able to meet the standard of care via a telehealth encounter.

Learn More >> [Aetna/resources/coronavirus](https://www.aetna.com/resources/coronavirus)



[PerformCare](#), *an AmeriHealth Caritas Company*

PerformCare supports providers' efforts to continue to serve members through the use of telehealth as an alternative to face-to-face services. Providers should follow the [Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Memorandum \(PDF\)](#) on Telehealth Guidelines Related to COVID-19 (Bulletin OMHSAS-20-20) as well as [Informational Bulletin \(IB 01-20\) \(PDF\)](#) from the [Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs](#).

- Telehealth services have now been expanded to include telephonic video technology commonly available on smartphones and other electronic devices, as well as telephone-only services when video technology is not available.
- The restriction on the types of providers who can provide telehealth has been lifted, and any individual who meets the requirements to provide services will now be able to provide those services via telehealth.

Learn more >> [PerformCare's telehealth services \(PDF\)](#).



[Anthem and Beacon](#)

Anthem and Beacon recommend members use virtual care options when possible, as it is a convenient and safe way to access care that helps prevent the spread of coronavirus. As such, Anthem and Beacon are waiving cost sharing for substance use disorder and mental health care services delivered via telephonic and telehealth for most of their plans, where permissible, through September 30, 2020.

Anthem and Beacon have provided members with resources that include tips, connections to community organizations, videos, podcasts, state-specific operating guidelines, and webinars to assist consumers and providers in coping with stress, anxiety, and burnout. In addition, Anthem and Beacon are initiating virtual peer support groups, expanding care management, and improving community resources. They also are working on transitioning intensive outpatient and partial hospitalization programs to virtual platforms. Both companies have also focused on increased provider training and communication.

Furthermore, Anthem and Beacon have reached out to national mental health advocacy groups such as National Alliance on Mental Illness, Mental Health America, National Council for Behavioral Health, and the Kennedy Forum, and are ensuring strong partnerships to help people address their mental health concerns during the pandemic.

Learn More >> <https://www.anthem.com/coronavirus/> AND <https://www.beaconhealthoptions.com/coronavirus/>



Centene

Centene is providing assistance in securing small business loans, as part of a comprehensive financial aid package, to specifically help behavioral health providers and community-based behavioral health organizations, long-term service support organizations, and other safety net providers gain access to government sponsored small business loans and telehealth technology. More information is available [here](#).

Through a series of local partnerships, Centene will enable providers to better support communities that are experiencing elevated levels of stress and mental strain caused by an increase in grief, loss, economic pressure, unemployment and social isolation. Learn more >> [Centene To Invest In Critical Mental Health Resources](#).

Additionally:

- [Centene to Waive Primary Care, Behavioral Health, and Telehealth Costs for Medicare Advantage Members for Remainder of 2020.](#)
- [Centene and Quartet Health expand partnership nationwide to help ensure members have access to critical behavioral health care during COVID-19 pandemic and beyond](#)

Learn More >> <https://www.centene.com/covid-19-resource-center.html>



Cigna customers can receive virtual behavioral health care from psychiatrists and all behavioral healthcare providers with virtual care capabilities. Coverage has been expanded to include facility and clinic-based services, as well as direct outpatient care. Cigna has also opened a 24-hour toll-free helpline (1-855-287-8400) to connect people directly with qualified clinicians who can provide support and guidance.

Additionally:

- Cigna is offering supportive resources, including webinars, for customers, clients and communities, for managing anxiety, fear, stress, and improving resiliency.
- [Cigna Adds Talkspace To Its Rapidly-Expanding Virtual Provider Network.](#)

- [Expands and extends its COVID-19 Relief Efforts for Medicare Advantage and individual and family plans.](#)

Learn More >> www.cigna.com/coronavirus



[Kaiser Permanente](#)

Kaiser Permanente has proactively extended the use of telehealth appointments via video and phone where appropriate. Kaiser members have many ways to [get care](#) without leaving the safety and comfort of their home; for mental health advice, Kaiser members can call [1-800-900-3277](tel:1-800-900-3277) (TTY 711), 24/7.



[Magellan Healthcare](#)

To address the mental health and emotional well-being concerns of our nation's first responders and healthcare workers, Magellan Healthcare has opened a free national 24-hour crisis hotline that will be answered by certified, licensed mental health clinicians. Call 1-800-327-7451 (TTY 711) if you need to talk.

Magellan also has waived requirements to provide services via telehealth and helped providers access a telehealth platform, in addition to running PSAs, conducting webinars and group chats, and participating in interviews for TV and print.

Magellan members can meet with a provider via telehealth for routine outpatient services such as therapy, counseling, medication management, and substance use treatment.

Additionally, Magellan announced the opening of a crisis text line for all first responders and healthcare workers who are serving on the frontline of the coronavirus pandemic that can be accessed via a secure [mPulse Mobile](#) platform.

Learn More >> <https://www.magellanhealthcare.com/covid-19-2/covid-19/>



[New Directions Behavioral Health](#)

Anyone can call New Directions' emotional support number 833-848-1764, a free and confidential 24/7 mental health helpline staffed by trained and caring professionals ready to guide people to the care they need. New Directions will keep this number open as long as necessary to support individuals and communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

New Directions also has a crisis page with resources for coping with substance use disorders, anxiety, grief and loss, and mental health tips.

Learn More >> <https://www.ndbh.com/CrisisResources>



[Optum](#)

Optum is allowing the use of popular applications for video chat or telephonic care to support their commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid members. Effective immediately, members or providers who do not have access to the types of approved technology typically required to conduct a virtual visit, may now use alternative technologies like telephone visits or common video chat services — such as Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger, Zoom, Google Hangouts or Skype — to access and perform services. This also applies to health care providers who are qualified and licensed in accordance with applicable regulations to provide Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. Additional resources available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Optum Provider Express Portal >> [HERE](#)

Learn More >> <https://www.optum.com/covid-19.html>

**Regulations regarding telehealth services and care package availability for Medicaid members varies by state and, in some cases, are changing in light of the current situation.*

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[ABHW](#) is the leading health plan association working to improve access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW's members include national and regional health plans who care for more than 200 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care. Member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, Anthem/Beacon, Centene Corporation, Cigna, Kaiser Permanente, Magellan Health, New Directions Behavioral Health, and Optum.