



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2025

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The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) Responds to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)' Regulations on Tele-prescribing of Controlled Substances

Washington D.C. – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 200 million people, issued the following statement in response to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)' three regulations on tele-prescribing of controlled substances: the [Expansion of Buprenorphine Treatment via Telemedicine Encounter](#), [Continuity of Care via Telemedicine for Veterans Affairs Patients](#), and Proposed Rule for [Special Registrations for Telemedicine and Limited State Telemedicine Registrations](#).

ABHW applauds the DEA and HHS for expanding access to substance use disorder treatment by authorizing practitioners registered by the DEA to prescribe buprenorphine via telemedicine encounters without the need for an initial in-person evaluation, and ABHW looks forward to reviewing the proposed rule for special registrations for telemedicine and limited state telemedicine registrations.

“The Drug Enforcement Administration and Department of Health and Human Services took important steps toward ensuring millions of Americans with substance use disorders can receive the care they need,” said Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) President and CEO Debbie Witchey. “Substance use disorders affect 61.2 million Americans ages 12 and older, yet only one in five individuals with substance use disorders receive treatment. ABHW appreciates the DEA and HHS for putting patients first and enabling more people to access treatment.”

ABHW strongly supports the use of telemedicine and our members are committed to ensuring access to care. We look forward to working with the Trump Administration and Congress to promote access to substance use disorder care and reviewing the proposed rule that was issued.

For more on ABHW's efforts and advocacy related to tele-prescribing of controlled substances, please visit <https://abhw.org/advocacy>.

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

ABHW is the nation's only health plan association that is exclusively dedicated to improving access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW's members include national and regional health plans that care for more than 200 million people. Together, we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and substance use disorder care. ABHW member companies – Aetna, a CVS Health Company; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Centene Corporation; Elevance Health; Evernorth; Kaiser Permanente; Lucet; Magellan Health; Molina Healthcare; Optum; and PerformCare, a subsidiary of AmeriHealth Caritas. To learn more, visit www.abhw.org and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).