

Adopted: 6/29/2020

Non-MSBA

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

## 635 Telemedicine

### Policy Statement

This telemedicine policy provides a comprehensive protocol for the use of web based telemedicine services to students within the Southern Plains Education Cooperative.

Telemedicine is the application of telecommunications technology for the delivery of professional services at a distance by linking a professional to a client for assessment, intervention, and/or consultation.

### Reason for the policy

Telemedicine services are provided to students for the purpose of consultation, evaluation, and service delivery in the areas of Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Mental Health, School Psychology and Speech/Language Pathology.

These policies address the following assurances

**A. Patient safety before, during, and after the telemedicine service is provided:**

The Individual Education Plain (IEP) states that a student has access to an adult to assure safety during a telemedicine session. Student movement to and from the session shall be the same as other students receiving face to face services.

**B. Statement addressing when and how to discontinue telemedicine services:**

Students who have been determined appropriate candidates for telemedicine services, will follow the same Minnesota State criteria for entrance and exit from services as students receiving face to face services.

**C. Privacy and Security** The professional must ensure client confidentiality when telemedicine services are utilized. This includes demonstrating knowledge of:

- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 (HITEH; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.-a.)
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.)
- State and federal regulations pertaining to electronic storage of consumer information for local computer servers and local areas networks
- Type of technology utilized
- Knowledge of the telemedicine software and hardware applications

#### **D. Required Documentation**

- **Type of service provided.**
  - This information is documented in the IEP, and on the MA Billing activity logs.
- **Time service begins and time service ends**
  - This information is documented on the MA activity logs.
- **Description of provider's basis for determining telemedicine is appropriate**
  - Clinical services are based on the unique needs of each individual client, telemedicine may not be appropriate in all circumstances or for all students. Candidacy for receiving services via telemedicine will be assessed prior to initiating services. The client's education, culture, age, and ability will be used to determine eligibility.
  - Code of Ethics: Providers who hold the appropriate licensure or equivalent shall evaluate the effectiveness of services provided, technology employed and products dispensed, and they shall provide services or dispense products only when benefit can be expected.  
  
Providers shall make use of technology and instrumentation consistent with accepted professional guidelines in their areas of practice. If proper technology is not available, an appropriate referral may be made.

- **Mode of transmission**

The Southern Plains Education Cooperative determines the appropriate web-based platform utilized to transmit telemedicine services that meet state and federal regulations.

Providers shall ensure that all technology and instrumentation used to provide services or to conduct research and scholarly activities are in proper working order and properly calibrated.

- **Location of originating and distant site**

The originating site is the location of the student at the time the provider is providing the service via a telemedicine session. Documentation of the site occurs on the IEP and on the Medical Assistance (MA) activity log.

The distant site is the location where the licensed provider is located while providing the telemedicine service. Documentation of location occurs on the IEP and on the MA activity log.

## **Applicability**

This policy applies to all providers utilizing a web-based platform to deliver telemedicine services.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Southern Plains providers who deliver telemedicine services must possess specialized knowledge and skills in selecting assessments and interventions that are appropriate to the technology and take into consideration client and disorder variables.

Assessment and therapy procedures and materials may need to be modified or adapted to accommodate the lack of physical contact with the client. These modifications are reflected in the interpretation and documentation of the service.

The administrative body is responsible for defining telemedicine-based services in a school that will:

- Ensure the telemedicine professional meet all state requirements to practice in the school
- Ensure the telemedicine professional have knowledge, skills and training in the use of telemedicine