

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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# **Blue Cross NC Keeping Expanded Telehealth Policies in Place Through End of 2020**

*Doctor visits by video or phone will continue to be covered the same as face-to-face visits*

**DURHAM, N.C.** – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) announced it is extending its expanded reimbursement policy for doctor visits by video or phone through the end of the year and will continue to cover these telehealth visits the same as face-to-face visits. The expanded reimbursement policy was proactively put into place at the beginning of the COVID-19 public health crisis to save lives by preventing the spread of disease through social distancing, and reduce the strain on hospitals, emergency rooms, and urgent care centers.

“Blue Cross NC is committed to helping members get the quality, affordable care they need, when they need it,” said Rahul Rajkumar, chief medical officer at Blue Cross NC. “We strongly encourage members to seek virtual care whenever possible and are committed to continuing to respond to this crisis to best serve our members, support doctors, nurses and hospitals.”

Blue Cross NC has been covering telehealth for more than 20 years and will continue to do so after the pandemic. COVID-19 is driving long-term changes in how doctors and patients use and value telehealth. Blue Cross NC will use data and insights gained from this time period of increased virtual visits to update its telehealth policy to best serve members. This review period will ensure that telehealth remains a tool that improves health, increases access to health care, and lowers costs for members. The new policy will be announced later in the year.

In addition to expanded telehealth coverage, Blue Cross NC has already taken significant actions to help members during this public health crisis, including waiving cost-sharing for testing and treatment related to COVID-19. For providers, Blue Cross NC has taken multiple steps to make things easier by speeding payments and removing barriers to care.

The COVID-19 crisis is requiring everyone in the health care community to work together and do their part. You can find more information at [BlueCrossNC.com/Coronavirus](https://www.bcbsnc.com/Coronavirus).

**About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina:**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) is committed to making health care better, simpler and more affordable. We have been driving better health in North Carolina since 1933, working to tackle our communities' greatest health challenges. Blue Cross NC serves its customers and communities of more than 3.8 million members, including approximately 1.1 million on behalf of other Blue Plans. Blue Cross NC is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Visit Blue Cross NC online at [www.bluecrossnc.com](http://www.bluecrossnc.com). All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

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