



April 5, 2023

The Honorable Chris Holden
Chairman, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 5650
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1241 (Weber) Medi-Cal: telehealth – Support as amended March 23, 2023

Dear Chairman Wood,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write to you in support of AB 1241, which would recast the current-law requirement for providers offering services via telehealth to also provide or facilitate in-person care, as a requirement to maintain the ability to provide or facilitate in-person care, and would clarify that current law does not require a provider to schedule an appointment with a different provider on behalf of a patient in order to facilitate in-person care.

Current law requires that Medi-Cal telehealth providers must be able to offer patients services in-person or have access to other providers' schedules to book the patient an in-person appointment. However, the problem is that there is evidence this will disqualify many California-licensed providers from offering telehealth services through Medi-Cal. More specifically, recent requirements set to go into effect on January 1, 2024, would create a separate, administratively burdensome standard for providers to offer telehealth services to Medi-Cal patients that is different from when the provider offers the same in-person services.

Therefore, AB 1241 is intended to ensure Medi-Cal patients retain the ability to receive services through telehealth. This bill intends to clarify these provisions to remove barriers to providing telehealth. AB 1241 is a means to ensure existing law does not impede California licensed health care providers in the Medi-Cal program from offering telehealth services to patients; CSAP believes all patients should maintain the same quality of care, regardless of whether they are virtual or in-person.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support AB 1241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yoder', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Paul Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D.