

Sen. Larson, Rep. Anderson: Introduce the Telehealth Parity Act

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Madison, WI – Senator Chris Larson and Representative Jimmy Anderson have introduced legislation (LRB 2041 – The Telehealth Parity Act) to establish telehealth coverage parity in Wisconsin.

Whether due to a lack of providers or specialists nearby, poor access to transportation, limited personal mobility, pandemic-era capacity constraints, or limited hours that don't match up with people's work schedules, in-person healthcare is simply not as accessible as it could be.

The expanded access and potential for 24/7 service that telehealth offers could be a lifeline for countless individuals, and is a particularly attractive option for people with mental health concerns like anxiety or depression, which might make office visits extremely daunting. Unfortunately, Wisconsin law does not currently require insurance companies to provide full telehealth coverage.

This bill would change that, by requiring insurance companies to cover virtual medical services in the same manner they would if those services were provided in-person.

According to a [recent industry survey](#) by the Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI), 94% of insurers surveyed expanded telehealth coverage in 2020 in response to the pandemic, but less than half of them (47%) planned to continue with the same level of expanded telehealth services this year.

The need for telehealth is not going away, and as we saw in 2020, insurers are

clearly capable of providing this coverage. The time for telehealth parity is now.