Talking Points: CONNECT for Health Act

The CONNECT for Health Act seeks to greatly expand telehealth services and remote patient monitoring, allowing medical care, services, monitoring, information dissemination, and contact to occur over a distance using various technological means. In the end, such efforts have been proven to save money and improve care.

Current Medicare rules prevent such telehealth services from being covered.

- Current limits involve:
  - Restrictions based on location of patient.
  - Restrictions based on type of facilities involved.
  - Restrictions based on the types of providers/services provided.
  - Restrictions based on reimbursement codes.

This bill removes a lot of these restrictions in key situations for Medicare beneficiaries and providers.

- This bill creates a bridge program that moves towards goals of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act and the Merit-based Incentive Payment System.
- This bill also allows telehealth services to be covered by alternative payment methods.
- The bill also allows a massive expansion of the types of facilities, locations, and patients eligible for telehealth services.
- This bill also allows these telehealth services to be considered a basic benefit of Medicare Advantage.
The telehealth benefits contained in the bill will lead to overall cost reductions

- An Avalere analysis of just three major provisions in the bill showed $1.8 billion in savings over a decade.
- This bill pays particular attention to those suffering from chronic illnesses who need constant (and costly) care, reducing the costs associated with their care by making it more effective and less intensive/disruptive for all parties concerned.

This bill has widespread and bipartisan support.

- This bill has the support of a growing list, including: AARP, AMA, Anthem, Kaiser Permanente, and dozens of other major healthcare-related organizations, including medical professionals’ and insurance organizations, national/regional/local public health providers/groups, and patient advocacy groups
- The bill was crafted by both Republicans and Democrats in both the Senate and the House and has been cosponsored already by a growing list of dozens of senators and representatives from both parties.