



Department
of Health

Early Intervention Guidance: COVID-19 and Teletherapy

September 24, 2020

1

2

Background

From guidance issued in March and April 2020:

Telehealth/Virtual Early Intervention Visits Telehealth (virtual) visits are normally not reimbursable under the Early Intervention Program. However, during the declared state of emergency, reimbursement will be available for individual telehealth (virtual) early intervention services provided in accordance with the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and for which there is a service authorization under the following circumstances:

- The family expresses a need for, and agrees to, use of virtual early intervention visits during the time of this declared emergency.



2

Background

- Prior to initiating telehealth services, the family must sign a consent for service to be delivered virtually. The family must understand that virtual services pursuant to their IFSP will be in place of, and not in addition to, their IFSP mandate. Signing the consent can take place via email (if the family has consented to use of email), or via US postal service or fax.
- Providers and families have the necessary platform to conduct virtual therapy services. The service must include video and audio components for the entire duration of the authorized visit. If the technology fails and the full authorized session is not delivered, it is not billable.
- Therapy services cannot exceed the visits included in the child's IFSP.
- Virtual therapy services must be a minimum of 30 minutes in duration.
- Providers must maintain all required documentation of the therapy service and note that it was provided virtually. See additional documentation guidance below.
- Group services cannot be conducted virtually; however, the child's IFSP may be amended to reflect individual services, if appropriate.



Bureau of Early Intervention COVID-19 EI Guidance Documents

Guidance to EI Providers Regarding Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Revised 04.01.2020

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eiproviders_04.01.20

Consent for the Use of Telehealth During Declared State of Emergency for COVID-19 – Revised 04.01.2020

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_cov19_beiconsent_telehealth_04.01.20.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Virtual EI Visits During COVID-19 Declared State of Emergency (Questions 1-22) – Revised 04/01/2020

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eifaqs_1-22_04.01.20.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Virtual EI Visits During COVID-19 Declared State of Emergency (Questions 23-37) – New 04.01.2020

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eifaqs_23-37_04.01.20.pdf



5

Current Guidance on Teletherapy Services

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Virtual EI Visits During COVID-19 Declared State of Emergency (Questions 38-57) – Revised 06.29.2020

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eifaqs_38-57.pdf

Reopening New York: Resuming in-Person Early Intervention Program Services

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_reopening_eip_services.pdf

Update: Home and Community-Based Services Regarding COVID-19

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_homecare_services_update.pdf



5

6

Updated Guidance on EI Services

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Virtual Early Intervention Visits During COVID-19 Declared State of Emergency

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eifaqs_58-61_09.22.20.pdf

NYS DOH Early Intervention Program Update: Teletherapy Services without a Visual Component

https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/docs/doh_covid19_eiproviders_teletherapy%20Services_no_vc_9.22.2020.pdf



6

Teletherapy Going Forward

From April 1, 2020 guidance:

When the declared state of emergency is no longer in place, there will be no reimbursement available for virtual early intervention services until formal guidance on the delivery of early intervention services via telehealth is issued.

Planning for the Future

- The EICC voted at its June 2020 meeting to add Teletherapy to the existing Task Force on EI Provider Workforce Capacity.
- In conjunction with the EICC Task Force on Workforce Capacity, next steps include working with EI stakeholders to better understand the experience of families, providers and counties with use of teletherapy.



Questions

