



May 13, 2021

The Honorable Joe Sanfelippo
Chairman, Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Health
Wisconsin State Assembly
2 East Main Street, Room 314 North
Madison, WI 53708

The Honorable Rob Summerfield
Vice-Chairman, Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Health
Wisconsin State Assembly
2 East Main Street, Room 125 West
Madison, WI 53708

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 296

Dear Chairman Sanfelippo and Vice-Chairman Summerfield,

On behalf of the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the over 400 organizations we represent, I am writing to voice our support for Assembly Bill 296.

The ATA is the only organization dedicated solely to the advancement of telehealth in the United States. Our primary objective is to provide Americans with affordable, high-quality health care whenever and wherever they need it. The use of telehealth services eases the burden placed on the nation's health care infrastructure, allowing the system to deliver services to millions more patients every year in an efficient and effective manner. The ATA represents a diverse and expansive coalition of technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working together to promote the implementation of telehealth across the country, endorse responsible telehealth policy, encourage government and market normalization, and deliver education and resources designed to further the integration of virtual care through the use of various innovative technologies.

Assembly Bill 296 serves as a rational expansion of Wisconsin's telehealth policy. The proposed legislation incorporates a technology-neutral definition of telehealth in the state's statutory chapters that pertain to occupational licensing, allowing practitioners to utilize asynchronous (non-real-time) technologies, synchronous (real-time) modalities, and remote patient monitoring devices to provide telehealth services to their patients. Additionally, language in the bill would require departments, examining boards, and affiliated credentialing boards to use this permissive definition of telehealth when promulgating rules related to online health care.

Across the country, providers are relying increasingly on asynchronous telehealth technologies to perform patient evaluations and diagnoses in a variety of fields. In addition, medical professionals are utilizing remote patient monitoring technologies to move care out of the hospital, clinic, or doctor's office and into



the home, where providers can monitor, collect, and analyze a patient's physiologic data to create care management plans for patients, especially those with chronic conditions.

The ATA applauds the effort of the legislature to expand Wisconsinites' access to high-quality, affordable health care. Our organization maintains that state legislatures should not determine which technologies are more appropriate than others for use in the delivery of telehealth services. Instead, policymakers should defer this decision to the licensed practitioner delivering telehealth services. This practitioner, on the basis of his or her professional opinion, can determine which technologies are necessary to meet the standard of care for the condition presented by the patient.

Additionally, the use of asynchronous technologies, which can be utilized even with mediocre bandwidth connections, allows patients who lack access to reliable internet connections to communicate effectively with their providers from the comfort of their homes. Currently, almost 600,000 Wisconsinites do not have consistent access to high-speed internet connections. By enabling Wisconsin residents to receive telehealth services through the use of asynchronous modalities, the legislature ensures that unserved and underserved Wisconsinites, particularly those in rural areas, receive the same level of access to high-quality health care as those who are able to take advantage of more reliable internet connections.

We thank you for your strong support of telehealth in Wisconsin. In approving this technologically permissive definition of telehealth, Wisconsin will become one of the most telehealth-friendly states in the nation, creating a patient-centered health care experience and opening the door to future technological innovations in the process. We urge you and your colleagues to pass Assembly Bill 296 in the interest of expanding Wisconsin residents' access to affordable, high-quality health care. Please let us know how we can be helpful in your efforts to adopt sensible telehealth policy in Wisconsin. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at kzebley@americantelemed.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Zebley", written in a cursive style.

Kyle Zebley
Public Policy Director
American Telemedicine Association