

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Mitt Romney
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Telehealth Coverage During Coronavirus Crisis

Dear Senator Romney:

I write on behalf of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI) to express support for your recent statement regarding private insurance coverage for telehealth services during the COVID-19 crisis.

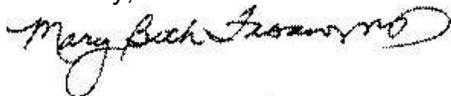
Established in 1943, the AAAAI is a professional organization with more than 6,700 members in the United States, Canada and 72 other countries. This membership includes board certified allergist/immunologists, other medical specialists, allied health and related healthcare professionals – all with a special interest in the research and treatment of patients with allergic and immunological diseases.

We appreciate you bringing awareness to this problem and want to work with you to ensure this is addressed in legislation. AAAAI's members treat a variety of patients that are at a disproportionately higher risk for serious and potentially life-threatening complications related to COVID-19, including those with compromised immune systems and asthma. As the administration continues to stress the need to social distancing over the coming weeks, and expands Medicare coverage for telehealth services, we believe that patients who receive their health insurance from the private market deserve continued care through covered telehealth services.

Moreover, as Spring arrives, AAAAI's members are uniquely qualified to diagnose and treat seasonal allergies. During this crisis, the ability for our members to utilize telehealth services to differentiate the symptoms of COVID-19 to seasonal allergies can serve as a critical tool in both keeping patients from necessary but potentially dangerous visits to their doctor, and relieve the bandwidth issues expected at physician offices, urgent care centers, and emergency rooms across the country as the virus continues to spread.

Thank you for your leadership in protecting patients during this unique and difficult crisis. The AAAAI looks forward to working with you and your staff as issues related to allergies, asthma, and immunological disorders arise and would encourage you to contact Sheila Heitzig, JD, MNM, CAE, AAAAI Director of Practice and Policy, at (414) 272-6071 or sheitzig@aaaai.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mary Beth Fasano, MD, MSPH, FAAAAI
President, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

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