National Lieutenant Governors Association

Resolution to Reduce Barriers and Improve Access to Healthcare Through Telehealth

WHEREAS, the use of telehealth (audio contact with or without a video connection) has expanded widely across the country in response to COVID-19, allowing physicians and other health care professionals to continue providing health care to patients while minimizing the spread of the coronavirus and preventing coronavirus deaths.

WHEREAS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) declared payment for remote patient care in March, telehealth became the de facto vehicle to provide all noncritical patient care to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

WHEREAS, Third-party payers are increasing and expanding payment policy for telehealth following CMS' lead. Hospitals and practices are adapting to this new flexibility and transitioning from face-to-face visits to telehealth visits.

WHEREAS, telehealth has gained widespread acceptance by patients, physicians, and other clinicians across specialties, and will remain an integral part of health care delivery when the pandemic emergency has passed.

WHEREAS, telehealth may particularly benefit high-risk patients, such as those with heart disease, who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19 and other illnesses, by providing them with an alternative to in person visits.

WHEREAS, according to the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, telehealth has the potential to make health care more personalized, efficient, and coordinated; it has the potential to improve efficiency, patient and clinician satisfaction, and health outcomes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) support efforts by states to reduce barriers and improve appropriate access to healthcare through telehealth.

ADOPTED, this day, the 29th day of July, 2020.

Sponsors: Lt. Governor Pamela Evette (R – South Carolina), Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist (D – Michigan), Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long (D – Delaware), Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser (R – Louisiana), Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford (R – Maryland)