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March 16, 2020

The Honorable Seema Verma  
Administrator  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
7500 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Verma:

I write to urge you to provide guidance regarding expanded telehealth services.

As you know, H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, became law on March 6. A key component provided waiver authority for expanded access to telehealth services for Medicare beneficiaries as we combat the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic. This authority allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to waive originating site requirements for telehealth services in Medicare, and, subsequently, seniors can receive care from the comfort and safety of their homes. This crucial provision will help reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for older adults—a population that is especially vulnerable to this virus—by reducing the need to unnecessarily travel in their communities during an outbreak.

Despite the urgency of this moment, your office has yet to provide any guidance related to this telehealth waiver authority. Colorado is home to roughly 800,000 seniors, nearly all of whom will benefit from clear, concise, and timely communications from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. I urge you to provide guidance so that Coloradans can take advantage of telehealth services during this crisis. I await your imminent response detailing how and when CMS will use this new waiver authority.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



U.S. Senator Michael F. Bennet