

RCW 28B.20.830 Collaborative for the advancement of telemedicine

—Reports—Open meetings. (1) The collaborative for the advancement of telemedicine is created to enhance the understanding and use of health services provided through telemedicine and other similar models in Washington state. The collaborative shall be hosted by the University of Washington telehealth services and shall be comprised of one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate and the house of representatives, and representatives from the academic community, hospitals, clinics, and health care providers in primary care and specialty practices, carriers, and other interested parties.

(2) By July 1, 2016, the collaborative shall be convened. The collaborative shall develop recommendations on improving reimbursement and access to services, including originating site restrictions, provider to provider consultative models, and technologies and models of care not currently reimbursed; identify the existence of telemedicine best practices, guidelines, billing requirements, and fraud prevention developed by recognized medical and telemedicine organizations; and explore other priorities identified by members of the collaborative. After review of existing resources, the collaborative shall explore and make recommendations on whether to create a technical assistance center to support providers in implementing or expanding services delivered through telemedicine technologies.

(3) The collaborative must submit an initial progress report by December 1, 2016, with follow-up policy reports including recommendations by December 1, 2017, December 1, 2018, and December 1, 2021. The reports shall be shared with the relevant professional associations, governing boards or commissions, and the health care committees of the legislature.

(4) The collaborative shall study store and forward technology, with a focus on:

(a) Utilization;

(b) Whether store and forward technology should be paid for at parity with in-person services;

(c) The potential for store and forward technology to improve rural health outcomes in Washington state; and

(d) Ocular services.

(5) The meetings of the board shall be open public meetings, with meeting summaries available on a web page.

(6) The collaborative must study the need for an established patient/provider relationship before providing audio-only telemedicine, including considering what types of services may be provided without an established relationship. By December 1, 2021, the collaborative must submit a report to the legislature on its recommendations regarding the need for an established relationship for audio-only telemedicine.

(7) The future of the collaborative shall be reviewed by the legislature with consideration of ongoing technical assistance needs and opportunities. The collaborative terminates December 31, 2023. [2021 c 157 § 9; 2020 c 92 § 4; 2018 c 256 § 1; 2016 c 68 § 2.]

Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 157: See note following RCW 74.09.327.

Effective date—2020 c 92: See note following RCW 48.43.735.

Intent—2016 c 68: See note following RCW 48.43.735.