

# Policy, Patients, and Telehealth's Post- Pandemic Policy Potential

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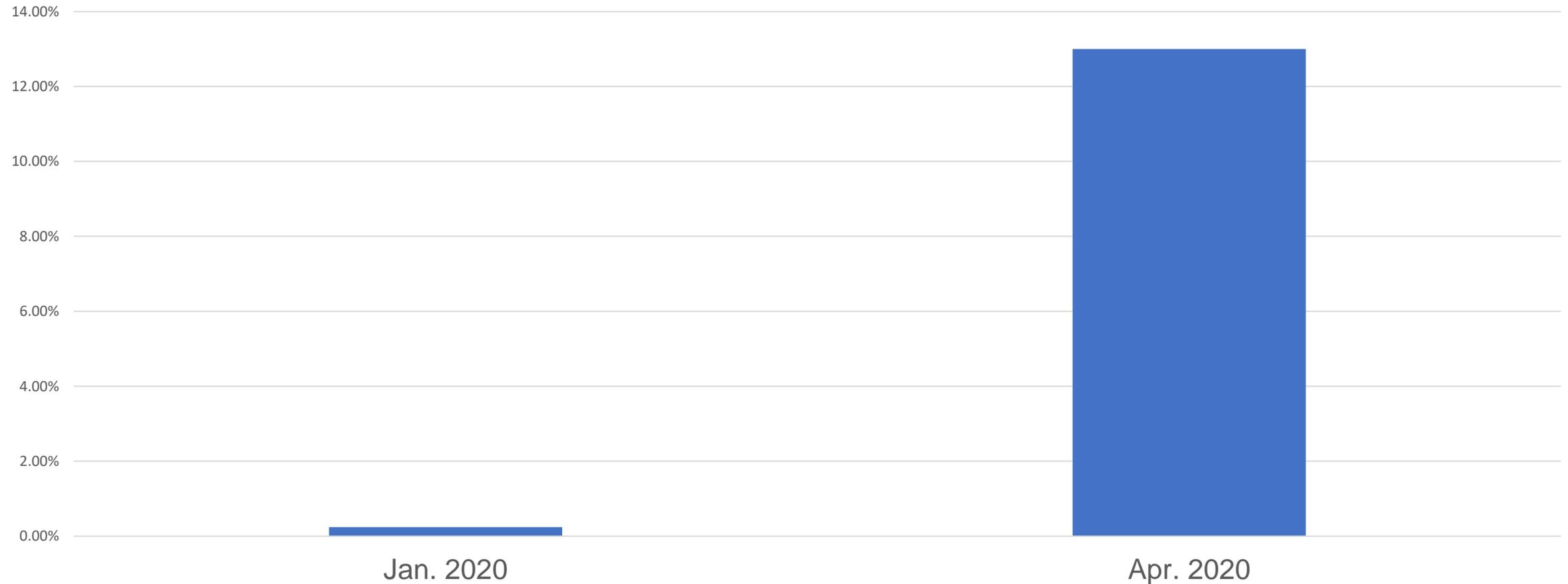


# Time: Ally or Enemy?

- Rarely are significant policy decisions made without the pressure of time
- Telehealth always showed promise, but there was never a time pressure to look at changes to really activate its full potential
- COVID-19 applied this time pressure immediately, firmly, and with no end in sight



# Telehealth Volume of Claim Lines (As a Percentage of Overall Claims)



Source: Fairhealth.org, Monthly Telehealth Tracker



# What is Telehealth's Post-Pandemic Policy Potential?

- Key changes made at the federal level; what's the current status and what needs to happen to keep them in place
- Licensure: Why this may be the most important issue in telehealth few are talking about
- How Minnesota is weighing the impact of the pandemic on its existing permanent telehealth law and temporary waivers
- How you can impact telehealth's post-pandemic policy potential

# Telehealth At The Federal Level

- Primarily impacts Medicare
- Extension of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) has relieved time pressure
- Payment and Reimbursement: An important piece of the discussion – needs to be sustainable
- Efficacy and use data are critical to decision making

# Telehealth At The Federal Level: 1834(m) Restrictions

- Federal statute restricts where patients can access telehealth under the Medicare Program
- This was temporarily waived by Congress for the length of the PHE
- Congress has to act to continue it beyond the expiration of the PHE
- Broad agreement this needs to happen; far from certain it will

# Telehealth At The Federal Level: Audio-only & Remote Patient Monitoring

- Audio-only telehealth: Available for length of PHE; can be made permanent via administrative action (Congress not needed)
- Audio-only can help bridge digital divide and address health inequities, but there are quality concerns
- Major strides made towards permanence for Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) services
- Some changes still temporary, but overall moving right direction

# Licensure: Critical Issue, Uncertain Future

- CMS temporarily waived physician licensure requirements for out-of-state physicians
- Only problem with is this policy essentially has no impact: States must also waive out-of-state licensing requirements to realize the full benefit of this modification
- Some states have made this change, others have relatively easy out-of-state telehealth licensing procedures, others have fully waived
- Permanent federal and state solutions exist, either are far from becoming reality

# Telehealth at the State Level: Minnesota

- Significant telehealth statute already on the books
- The state acted quickly to add temporary waivers, similar to federal changes
- Minnesota legislative leaders recognize the need to carefully analyze potential changes with patients as the focus
- Each state is unique, but they are all grappling with the same question: how effective is telehealth, is it of similar quality to in-person visits, and will its adoption continue post-pandemic?



# Telehealth's Post-Pandemic Policy Potential Depends on You

- Policymakers want and need to hear from you – and because of our new, virtual world, it's easier than ever
- Have a plan, tell your story, be a resource
- Don't ramble and leave time for listening
- Call or e-mail me anytime with questions or for help:  
[bpatrik@medicalalley.org](mailto:bpatrik@medicalalley.org); (952) 746-3825



# Time: Ally or Enemy?

- Right now, time is telehealth's ally
- More data is becoming available every day and a comprehensive analysis of telehealth's quality is ongoing
- Welcome the scrutiny and use the opportunity to share your stories
- Cannot let a thorough review of data remove the urgency – or time will again change allegiances

**Thank you.**