



## JANUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

*Over the past year, PBTRC has tried to de-mystify some of the challenges and barriers that you face in telehealth. Below are highlights of these activities and a new things on the horizon. Here's to a great 2015!*

### Upcoming Events

03

FEB

**Webinar: Malpractice and Telemedicine: Claims and Defenses (CTeL)**  
7:00am

12

APR

**HIMSS15 (Chicago, IL)**

14

APR

**38th Annual Rural Health Conference (Philadelphia, PA)**

03

MAY

**ATA 2015 (Los Angeles, CA)**

### Licensure

### Store-and-Forward



**David Wong, MD, PhD is the first provider who confirmed receiving Medicare Reimbursement for Store-and-Forward Services in Hawaii!**

For several years, we have been receiving questions about how specifically does one get reimbursed by Medicare for store-and-forward telehealth services as part of the Federal Telemedicine Demonstration Project in Hawaii or Alaska. We are pleased to say that we tracked down a provider and followed him through the entire process of getting reimbursed in this way.

Here are the steps:

- Provide service to beneficiary in Hawaii

# *Federation of* **STATE MEDICAL BOARDS**

## **FSMB Compact**

On September 5, 2014, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) released the final version of their proposal of interstate medical licensure compact (Compact) language.

The language provides a framework for a new licensing option under which qualified physicians seeking to practice in multiple states would be eligible for expedited licensure in all states participating in the Compact. As of 2015, nine states have introduced bills to their state legislatures to adopt the Compact. Those states are: Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming.

To view the compact language in its entirety, please click [HERE](#).

To view the legislation, please click [HERE](#)

## **Special Licenses for Telehealth**

The State of Hawaii does not have a special license or certificate for telehealth. Across the nation, 10 states issue special licenses or certificates for telehealth. These special licenses/certificates allow out of state providers to render services via telehealth into a state if certain conditions are met, such as agreeing that they will not open an office in that state, etc.

The 10 states that currently provide these special licenses or certificates are:

(or Alaska)

- Bill using telehealth store-and-forward "GQ" modifier certifies that the asynchronous medical file was collected and transmitted to distant site from a Federal Telemedicine Demonstration Project in Alaska or Hawaii
- Medicare sends a certification form to provider
- Sign form to certify that the patient is in Hawaii and send back to Medicare
- Get paid!

Dr. David Wong, MD, PhD, CEO and Co-Founder, Direct Dermatology, a dermatologist who lives in California and provides teledermatology services to patients at Lanai Community Health Center and West Hawaii Community Health Center via store-and-forward. Dr. Wong is also the current Pacific Islands Chapter of the American Telemedicine Association (PICATA) President.

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## **Reimbursement Law**

### **Senate Bill 2469, signed into law on June 30, 2014!**

Key Points:

- Telehealth reimbursement must be equivalent to the rates of in person services
- Requires a prior patient relationship with one of the health care providers involved in the interaction
- Patient needs to be accompanied by a treating health care provider (except for behavioral mental health services)
- Health care provider: primary care provider, mental health, oral health, physicians and osteopathic physicians,

- Alabama
- Louisiana
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Oklahoma

advanced practice registered nurses, psychologists, and dentists

- Statutory references changed from "telemedicine" to "telehealth" for consistency

To view the law in its entirety, click [HERE](#).

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## Malpractice

### Is telehealth covered or not?

PBTRC reached out to malpractice insurance providers in Hawaii and the Pacific Island territories for clarification on their telehealth policies. Please visit our [website](#) to see the various policies and malpractice coverage of telehealth services.

Below is a short summary of the telehealth policies for some malpractice insurers in Hawaii:

#### Medical Insurance Exchange of California (MIEC)

MIEC has a clear policy regarding telehealth coverage ([click here](#) for excerpt from policy)

- Must have prior notification with MIEC indicated principal place of practice
- Notification if you move
- Acts (or non-Acts) within state of principal place of practice as declared in policy
- Inform MIEC in writing regarding services provided via telehealth

#### HAPI ([click here](#) for summary)

- Prior established relationship between doctor and patient (in person) Telehealth can be used for follow-up with



## Queen's Medical Center Appoints Telemedicine Director

Dr. Matthew A. Koenig, Neurointensivist at the Queen's Medical Center, was recently appointed the Telemedicine Director for Queen's Medical Center. Congratulations Dr. Koenig!

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## On the Horizon...

### VTC Site Inventory

The PBTRC has updated the Video Teleconference (VTC) Site Inventory for all islands in the State of Hawaii. Please visit our [website](#) to view the inventory. If your site is not listed and would like to be, please contact us via email at [pbtrc@uhtasi.org](mailto:pbtrc@uhtasi.org) or by phone at 808 956 8848 and we will add you to the current list.

### Telehealth Survey

The PBTRC will be conducting a telephone survey to learn more about telehealth in Hawaii and how PBTRC can assist those interested in telehealth. We appreciate your cooperation in this process.

reasonable professional judgment based on 'facts and circumstances'

- In general, service covered same as other medical services should be within providers medical specialty, for the good of the patient

**The Doctors Company** ([click here](#) for summary)

- Standard policy – service via Internet or media excluded from policy (not covered) if no prior relationship established between doctor and patient
- IF prior relationship established, need to contact TDC underwriter to provide specific information (patient location, services, etc.). TDC will make determination on a case-by-case basis

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