



200 First Street SW
Rochester, Minnesota 55905

February 22, 2021

Dear Members of the Minnesota State Senate and House of Representatives,

As leaders of Mayo Clinic's Center for Connected Care, a dedicated operation within Mayo Clinic's Center for Digital Health and charged with developing new ways to deliver care virtually, thank you for your ongoing leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. As you continue to assess the needs and impact resulting from the virus, we write to strongly advocate for the efficacy of health services provided remotely and for the continuation of flexibilities temporarily granted for such care through the remainder of the pandemic and beyond.

More than one million people from all 50 states and 135 countries come to Mayo Clinic to receive the highest quality care at sites in Minnesota, Arizona, Florida and Wisconsin. As part of the largest integrated, not-for-profit medical group practice in the world, Mayo Clinic is dedicated to finding answers for patients through medical care, research and education. With more than 70,000 employees, Mayo Clinic brings together teams of specialists with a persistent and unwavering commitment to excellence.

While many types of care are best provided in person, for years Mayo Clinic has demonstrated the benefits of providing care virtually to some patients in appropriate situations, and this effort has only grown during the pandemic. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayo Clinic has conducted more telehealth visits per day across all our sites than we completed in calendar year 2019. While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges, perhaps its greatest opportunity and legacy will be the transformation in the practice of health care delivery itself.

The emergence of COVID-19 accelerated the transformation of health care delivery across a wide spectrum of organizations, including those in Minnesota. This dramatic transformation was the result of necessity as providers, at Mayo Clinic and beyond, raced to meet the immediate needs of the populations we serve – from the very rural to the most urban, from the young to our most senior and vulnerable. This transformation was also facilitated by the urgent yet thoughtful removal of barriers that limit the scope and design of medical practice. While these efforts have increased access to allow for care delivery in safe and local environments, with many patients being able to conduct these visits from home without having to risk virus exposure by traveling, recent data received from Mayo Clinic patient surveys also indicate that patients are equally satisfied with video visits as with in-person visits overall.

Over the last year, patients have experienced real benefit from care appointments conducted virtually, including within their homes (or current location) and via telephone. For some patients with

limited access to broadband or high-speed internet, audio-only appointment options still allow a patient to receive care without burden or increased risk of exposure by needing to travel. Of course, allowing patients to receive this care where they are has also been essential to minimizing exposure risk while still caring for patients and their ongoing health needs.

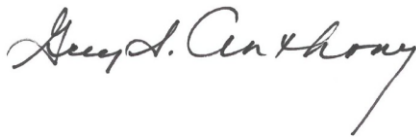
As you consider proposals to codify certain flexibilities and recognize care provided virtually as an appropriate delivery modality, please know that Mayo Clinic strongly believes that the leading care delivery models of the future will, as appropriate for the patient, incorporate telehealth as part of achieving high-value patient-centered care delivery. As such, the regulatory environment must also evolve to ensure that it supports innovative modes of care delivery that meet the patient in his or her home.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Ommen".

Steve Ommen, M.D.
Associate Dean
Center for Connected Care

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Anthony".

Greg Anthony
Vice Chair
Center for Connected Care