

# Technology for Treatment – Telehealth for Therapy

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*"Treatment with the Help of a Horse"*

# Disclaimer . . .

- Information changes as often as daily
- LOTS of resources out there - be certain of the date of the information
- Much of the current Federal, and therefore state and local information is applicable during the National Emergency – after that time?
- Know the regulations as well as your profession's interpretations.



# Are you ready for treatment?

- Is everyone willing to think outside the box?
- Technology?
- Prescriptions?
- Consents?
- Policies and Procedures?



# Using Technology for Treatment

- Virtual Services
  - E-visits
  - Virtual Check Ins
  - **Telehealth**



# Considerations

- Synchronous vs. asynchronous care
- Does your state allow for telehealth? For therapists? For assistants?
- Are you licensed in the state where your patient is?



# HIPAA / Documentation

- Consent – initial and daily documentation
- HHS/OCR has indicated that enforcement has been loosened (security, BAA)
- “Good faith provision”
- No public facing platforms
- Are ancillary people around during the treatment? Can you/do you need to control that?

# OCR with HHS (HIPAA)

- “OCR will exercise its enforcement discretion and will not impose penalties for noncompliance with the regulatory requirements under the HIPAA Rules against covered health care providers in connection with the **good faith provision** of telehealth during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency. This notification is **effective immediately**” (3/17/2020).



- “Providers are encouraged to notify patients that these third-party applications potentially introduce privacy risks, and providers should enable all available encryption and privacy modes when using such applications.” [HHS.gov/hipaa](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa)
- Business Associate Agreement (BAA) – use a platform that has the agreement, or obtain one, if possible





# Nuts and Bolts - Therapist

- Prescription for therapy (NOT for hippotherapy or equine related activities)
- Consents
- Physical set up / Equipment
- Platform downloaded and checked
- Contact info for the patient/caregiver
- Resources – You Tube, Platforms, Colleagues - AHA



# Nuts and Bolts - Patient

- Set up a scheduled time
- Do you want the patient to have anything particular available? Or set up ahead of time?
- Who is going to operate the video?
- Does the patient need someone to assist them?



# Your focus . . . these are not mutually exclusive . . .

- Activities directly with the patient
- Activities in a grouping of parents/siblings/caregivers
- Instruction to parents/caregivers
- Observation and Feedback
- Testing



# Pros/Advantages -

- We get to see them in their home/interacting with the folks they usually do their activities with
- This is the patient's 'natural' environment
- A chance for the caregivers to become more engaged, they must participate in hands on and you can guide/support
- A better perspective to see the 'whole' person
- With recording, can slow down the movement to analyze it
- More focused view of the patient, fewer distractions



# Cons / Disadvantages

- You can't get on a horse(!)
- Hands on 'feel' is lost, as is hands on skill
- More screen time for the patient
- Standardized tools need to be ones that can be administered by non-trained persons, or be 'caregiver report'
- Very intense, focused work
- (currently) takes more time – planning, follow up
- Lots of sitting for the therapist



## ■ Reimbursement - Telehealth

- Coding – be familiar with the codes and modifiers that might be needed
- Place of service
- Insurance – Many state governors have mandated that telehealth is covered for outpatient therapy through Insurance, and/or Medicaid
- Access APTA, AOTA, ASHA and the AHA, Inc website for further information



# Keep up to Date / Anticipate the end

- Keep apprised of policies/decisions (Federal, State, Payers)

*This is an opportunity . . .*

*Be ready for the transition back to the pre-virus world – It will come!!!*

