

Sec. 4. TELEMEDICINE FOR TREATMENT OF SUBSTANCE USE

DISORDER; ~~PILOT~~

(a) The Green Mountain Care Board and Department of Vermont Health Access shall ~~develop a pilot program to enable~~ reimburse for Medicaid covered services for a patient taking buprenorphine or a drug containing buprenorphine for a substance use disorder to receive treatment from an addiction medicine specialist delivered through telemedicine at a health care facility that is capable of providing a secure telemedicine connection, when delivered by a Medicaid-enrolled provider, and whose location is convenient to the patient. The Board and the Department shall ensure that both the specialist and the hosting facility are reimbursed for services rendered.

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(b)(1) Patients beginning treatment for a substance use disorder with buprenorphine or a drug containing buprenorphine shall not receive treatment through telemedicine. A patient may receive treatment through telemedicine only after a period of stabilization on the buprenorphine or drug containing buprenorphine, as measured by an addiction medicine specialist using an assessment tool approved by the Department of Health.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, patients whose care has been transferred from a regional specialty addictions treatment center may begin receiving treatment through telemedicine immediately upon the transfer of care to an office-based opioid treatment provider.

(c) On or before January 15, 2017 and annually thereafter, the Board and the Department shall provide a ~~progress~~ report on the ~~pilot program~~ use and delivery of telemedicine by Department of Vermont Health Access to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

