

Telebehavioral health FAQs



Q. What is telebehavioral health?

A. Telebehavioral health is a means of delivering outpatient mental health and substance use disorder services by using online video therapy sessions on a secure Web-based platform.

Q. What types of clinicians are included in the network?

A. The telebehavioral health network consists of licensed social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychologists, and psychiatrists. Some clinicians can even prescribe medications when appropriate.*

Q. Are these clinicians considered in the network?

A. Yes, all telebehavioral health clinicians are contracted with Blue Shield's mental health service administrator (MHSA) and are considered in the network for eligible Blue Shield members.

Q. Which Blue Shield members are eligible to use telebehavioral health?

A. Telebehavioral health is available to all Blue Shield HMO and fully insured PPO members, as well as select GMA-PD members. Members can call the number on their Blue Shield member ID card for help in determining eligibility.

Q. Can telebehavioral health clinicians also see members in an office-based setting?

A. Yes. All clinicians in the network also have physical offices, and a member can switch back and forth as it suits their needs.

Q. Is parental consent required for minors to receive telebehavioral health services?

A. Minors age 12 and older can request treatment without parental consent.

Q. What conditions can be treated using telebehavioral health?

A. Clinicians in the telebehavioral health network can help members with a wide variety of conditions such as:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Grief
- Relationship or family issues
- Panic attacks
- Alcohol addiction
- Substance use disorder
- Stress from coping with a sickness

Q. How much does it cost to see a telebehavioral health clinician?

A. The cost of a telebehavioral health appointment is the same as the cost of a traditional office visit.

Q. How does a member get started?

A. Blue Shield plan members can follow these steps to find a telebehavioral health clinician:

1. Log in or register at blueshieldca.com.
2. Choose *Find a Doctor*, click on *Mental Health* and then *Visit the MHSA Network*.
3. On the provider search page, click on *Choose your Benefit Plan*, *Choose a Provider List*, enter a ZIP code and desired distance, then click *Search*.
4. On the search results page, click on *More Filters* and under *Specialties* choose *Telebehavioral Health*, then click *Search*.
5. Look for the telebehavioral health icon  on the provider profile.

* Members should check with their telebehavioral health provider to learn if he/she can prescribe medications electronically.



Telebehavioral health

Mental health issues are on the rise – nearly one in five American adults will experience an issue with mental health.* Working adults with mental health issues can impact employers by increasing absenteeism due to untreated conditions.

Introducing telebehavioral health

Blue Shield of California's mental health service administrator (MHSA) delivers value by focusing on access to care beyond traditional methods. Telebehavioral health offers Blue Shield members the flexibility and convenience to meet with mental health and substance use disorder providers in a secure, virtual environment such as a computer with webcam, smartphone, or tablet.



Large statewide network of providers

There are currently more than 600 licensed mental health and substance use disorder providers with years of experience in behavioral therapy available statewide.



Faster access to mental health services

Telebehavioral health providers are typically available for appointments within four days, which is significantly shorter than scheduling a traditional office visit.



Flexible appointment times

Many telebehavioral health providers are available during the lunch hour, in the evenings, and on weekends, enabling members to get help without taking time off from work. On average, 30% of appointments occur outside of traditional office hours.



Improved overall health

Eighty-one percent of Blue Shield members receiving telebehavioral health services reported significant improvement in their overall health.

88%

of enrolled members prefer telebehavioral health over traditional in-office care.

33%

said telebehavioral health was their only access to care based on their situations.

Happier and healthier employees are more productive, engaged, and present than those not able to get treatment. By increasing access to mental health services through telebehavioral health, your employees can get the help they need more quickly and easily.

* National Alliance on Mental Illness. Mental Health Facts in America. Retrieved June 14, 2018.

All enrollee statistics from Blue Shield of California's mental health service administrator (MHSA) internal study conducted, 2016.

Telebehavioral Health: Access a mental health or substance use disorder provider wherever you are

Are you feeling stressed about finding time to speak with a licensed therapist?

Are you worried about:



Finding child care



Taking time off from work



Transportation

Telebehavioral Health can help.

With Telebehavioral Health:

- You don't have to wait weeks for an appointment.
- Evening and weekend appointments are available.
- Some clinicians can prescribe medications when needed.
- Live video sessions are securely encrypted and confidential.

As a Blue Shield of California member, you can use this easy, convenient, and secure way to speak with your clinician by using a browser on your smartphone, tablet, or computer* – all within the privacy of your own home.

Telebehavioral Health providers can help with:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Grief
- Panic attacks
- Stress from coping with an illness

When providers work together, you receive better coordinated care – and enjoy better health. If you're comfortable doing so, have your therapist talk to your primary care provider about your treatment.

To get started, follow these steps:

1. Log in or register at blueshieldca.com.
2. Choose *Find a Doctor* > *Mental Health* > *Visit the MHSA Network*.
3. On the provider search page, enter your benefit plan and location details.
4. On the next page, click on *More Filters*, under "Specialties" choose *Telebehavioral Health*, and then click *Search*.
5. Look for the Telebehavioral Health icon  on the provider profile.

Your standard office visit copay applies to Telebehavioral Health appointments.

Please note: Telebehavioral Health is not appropriate for all conditions. If you're in crisis or have suicidal thoughts, seek help immediately. Please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room, or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255.

* Webcam and high-speed Internet required.