

SENATE BILL 2373

By Bell

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002, relative to telehealth services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002(a), is amended by deleting the language "title 63;" at the end of subdivision (3) substituting instead the language "title 63 or any state-contracted crisis service provider employed by a facility licensed under title 33;".

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002(a), is further amended by deleting subdivision (6) and substituting instead the following:

(6) "Telehealth" or "telemedicine" means the use of real-time audio, video, or other electronic media and telecommunications technologies that enable interaction between the healthcare services provider and the patient, or also store-and-forward telemedicine services, for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment of a patient in another location where there may be no in-person exchange, within the scope of practice of the healthcare services provider; and

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002(a), is further amended by deleting subdivision (4) in its entirety and renumbering the remaining subdivisions accordingly.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002(d), is amended by deleting subdivision (2) and substituting instead the following:

(2) Shall reimburse a healthcare services provider for the diagnosis, consultation, and treatment of an insured patient for a healthcare service covered under a health insurance policy or contract that is provided through telehealth on the same basis and at least at the same rate that the health insurance entity is responsible for

coverage for the provision of the same service through in-person encounters without any distinction or consideration of the geographic location, or any federal, state, or local designation or classification of the geographic area where the patient is located;

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 56-7-1002(e), is amended by deleting the subsection and substituting instead the following:

(e) A health insurance entity shall provide coverage for healthcare services provided during a telehealth encounter in a manner that is consistent with what the health insurance policy or contract provides for in-person encounters for the same service, and shall reimburse for healthcare services provided during a telehealth encounter on the same basis and at least at the same rate that the health insurance entity is responsible for coverage for the provision of the same service through in-person encounters without any distinction or consideration of the geographic location, or any federal, state, or local designation or classification of the geographic area where the patient is located.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, the public welfare requiring it.