

Photo by Brian McGowan on Unsplash

AAN NEWS & NOTES

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF NEUROLOGY

WWW.ALNEUROLOGY.COM

AAN president urges CMS to adopt broader telehealth policy for Medicare patients during COVID-19 pandemic

AAN President Amit Arora, MD, sent the following letter to Sen. Richard Shelby, Sen. Doug Jones, etc....

The letter echos the *American Academy of Neurology's letter* to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) sent on March 19.

As Executive Director of the Alabama Academy of Neurology, our members are seeking clarification from CMS on the implementation of Telehealth for our Medicare patients that is in effect due to the 1135 waiver with the COVID-19 crisis, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama is allowing us to "see" our patients and their insured by telehealth using a phone alone. Medicare is requiring us to use a device with audio AND video, like an iPhone with FACETIME. This is not fair to our patients who do not have a smart phone or computer with camera and internet. In other words, patients who are more affluent can be seen by smart phone but our less fortunate and elderly patients without these devices have to come to the office and risk their health or not have a visit at all to adjust their medications, treat new problems, or answer their concerns. We often treat elderly patients with neurologic diseases such as dementia Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease. They do not need to be out in the public with the COVID-19 pandemic.

I do not know what Medicare is afraid of by letting us communicate with patients by telephone during their regularly scheduled office visit or if they have concerns. We need to know what is happening with them. For our patients without video capability in their home (especially the poor and elderly), this policy is discriminatory and needs to be revised. 🗣️



CANCELED: American Academy of Neurology 2020 Annual Meeting April 25 - May 1, Toronto

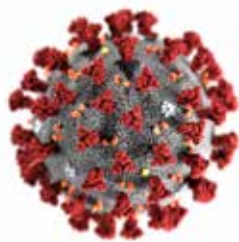
The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) announced March 13, 2020, that it has no choice but to cancel their Annual Meeting originally scheduled for April 25 - May 1, 2020, in Toronto.

"Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of our members, attendees, and ultimately our neurology patients is paramount, and serves as the reason for our decision to cancel the AAN Annual Meeting for the first time in our 72-year history," AAN President James C. Stevens, MD, FAAN, said in a statement. "Put simply, canceling the AAN Annual Meeting is the right thing to do during this historic time."

"We recognize canceling the world's largest gathering of neurologists impacts many of you and your education needs. Look for more information on different AAN educational opportunities throughout the remainder of 2020."

AAN asks for patience as they process full registration fee refunds for the thousands of members who registered for the Annual Meeting.

For more information contact AAN Member Services, memberservices@aan.com. 🗣️



American Academy of Neurology: COVID-19 Resource Center

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) is committed to providing guidance on the care of neurology patients affected by COVID-19, as well as how the novel coronavirus pandemic is affecting the field of neurology overall.

A dedicated [webpage](#) has been added to AAN's website to keep neurologists up-to-date on issues affecting your practice and your patients, as well as what's going on in education, research and advocacy.

Telemedicine

The AAN developed guidance for clinicians and practices looking to implement telemedicine services amid the COVID-19 crisis. It contains information regarding technology best practices, regulations specific to the novel coronavirus US Public Health Emergency, tips on performing a remote neurologic exam, coding the visit, and more.

- [View the Telemedicine and COVID-19 Implementation Guide](#)
- [Everything You Need to Know on Telemedicine and Remote Care](#)
- [CMS Telemedicine Health Care Provider Fact Sheet](#)

Teleneurology and COVID-19

The following instructional videos offer tips and tricks for those new to performing remote exams:

- [Telemedicine for Parkinson's: A Clinician's Guide](#)
- [Telemedicine for Parkinson's: A Live Demonstration](#)
- [Telemedicine: How to Do It Right](#) (Offers advice for getting the best patient experience, including framing, lighting, and location tips.)

Medicare Resources

- [Telehealth Coverage Policies](#)
- [CMS' Telemedicine Health Care Provider Fact Sheet](#)
- [Medicare Telehealth FAQ](#)
- [CMS Current Emergency Information Page](#)

Commercial Payers Resources

Many commercial payers are also broadening access to telehealth. Because individual payers have unique policies with regard to coverage, and we suggest visiting your payers' website or calling their provider line to best understand changing policies during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

- [America's Health Insurance Plans' Summary of Payer Response to COVID-19](#)
- [United Healthcare Provider Telehealth Policies](#)

RESOURCES FOR PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

- [New CPT® code for COVID-19 for testing](#)
- [CPT Assistant: AMA Fact Sheet on reporting COVID-19 testing](#)
- [New ICD-10-CM code for COVID-19](#)
- [CMS Offers Exemptions and Extensions for 2019 MIPS Submission](#)
- [Patient Safety Considerations](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [Physician wellness resources from the AAN](#)
- [Information and updates about telemedicine and remote care](#)



COVID-19 News and Resources for Alabama

Alabama Department of Public Health

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is posting regular updates on their website with information for healthcare providers and patients. View state-wide number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Alabama, messages from State Health Officer Scott Harris, MD, guidance for evaluation patients, and COVID-19 related emergency action of state agencies.



Medical Association of the State of Alabama

The Medical Association of the State of Alabama website provides a current list of COVID-19 testing centers across the state, telehealth guidance and links to resources for your practice setting.



AAN
NEWS & NOTES
Alabama Academy of
Neurology
19 S. Jackson Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 954-2500
Fax (334) 269-5200
www.alneurology.com

Amit Arora, MD, Publisher
Meghan Martin,
Executive Editor
Charlotte H. Morris, Senior Editor

Articles should be sent to
Charlotte H. Morris,
[at cmorris@alamedical.org](mailto:cmorris@alamedical.org)
two weeks in advance of printing.

AAN News & Notes is published quarterly. The articles are meant to provoke thought and comment and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members, Board of Directors or staff of the Alabama Academy of Neurology. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.