

## **COVID-19 PHE POLICIES FOR THERAPY AND PHYSICIAN TELEHEALTH REMAIN IN PLACE FOR SNF AND ALF RESIDENTS**

Last week, CMS responded to stakeholder concerns about the uncertain status of certain important Medicare Part B telehealth waivers impacting residents of nursing facilities and assisted living facilities. Specifically, in the [CMS Waivers, Flexibilities, and the End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency FAQs](#), the Agency updated FAQs #22 and #23:

- FAQ #22 – Confirmed that the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 provisions recognize physical therapists (PT), occupational therapists (OT), and speech-language pathologists (SLP), working in office- or facility-based settings, remain as distant site practitioners under Medicare law.
- FAQ #23 – CMS indicated that physicians could continue to furnish telehealth services to nursing facility residents for visits, other than the required 30 or 60 day in-person visits required under 42 CFR 483.30, until at least December 31, 2023.

These decisions extend the flexibilities for Medicare beneficiaries residing in SNF and ALF settings, particularly those in rural and underserved areas. This allows for ongoing access to therapy and physician telehealth services under Medicare Part B, as they experienced during the COVID-19 PHE. Providers, including SNFs, will continue to submit claims for these telehealth services as they have done so during the PHE.