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HB 49: Biennial State Budget Bill – Telemedicine

Ohio House Finance Committee

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Ryan, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the Ohio House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of the telemedicine parity amendment to the state budget bill, House Bill 49. My name is Matt Stanton, and I am the Senior Director of Distance Health in the Office of Clinical Transformation for the Cleveland Clinic.

The inclusion of this amendment in the state budget bill would create telehealth reimbursement parity. This would be an incredible step forward for us in Ohio, as we are currently only 1 of 10 states in the nation that, prior to this, had no legislative activity on payment parity. There are currently 33 States (and DC) that have full or partial Payment Parity laws that have already passed. The remaining states have proposed parity bills in process. So Ohio, while later to the game, is in good company in moving forward with this.

To showcase the Cleveland Clinic's dedication to telehealth and telemedicine, I would like to share with you information on Cleveland Clinic Express Care Online. Express Care Online is medical care designed for the way our patients live today. It's a simple, affordable service that lets a patient see a provider online. Once patients connect to Express Care Online, we can take a history by speaking directly with them and observing them, review their medical history, answer their questions and, if appropriate, diagnose, treat and prescribe medication. We can then send the prescription straight to the patient's pharmacy, electronically. We have found that this convenient way of communicating with our patients results in excellent provider and patient satisfaction.

To date, our data shows that 86% of patients report overall satisfaction with the Cleveland Clinic Express Care Online visit, a satisfaction rate that exceeds our comparable service line in brick and mortar settings. 59% of patients cite that they save 1-3 hours, and 24% cite that they save more than 3 hours through using Express Care Online. 81% of patients respond that they would recommend Express Care Online to their family members, and 86% report that they found it easy to see, hear, and talk to the clinician online.

In addition, a recent study from Anthem insurance released April 23, 2017 determined that telemedicine visit episodes were less costly than care at other locations for the same diagnoses, they found similar follow-up visit rates as compared to in-person visits, indicating a similar rate of problem resolution. The study included Anthem medical claims from January 2014-May 2015, which covered 4,635 telemedicine visits. The claims were analyzed for three weeks following the visit to determine differences in lab tests, imaging, subsequent outpatient evaluation and management (follow-up) visits, subsequent ED and inpatient care, and total cost of all care during the episode for initial visit and subsequent care, both medical and pharmacy. Anthem estimates that telemedicine visits resulted in savings of approximately \$200 per three-week episode, including medical and pharmacy costs.

Establishing parity for these visits allows providers to work in rural areas where they have critical access issues and where providers are limited. Expanding access to care in this way is especially



important when we take a look at specialties that are in high demand, such as addiction services, mental health and psychiatry.

Again, the Cleveland Clinic stands in support of this telehealth parity amendment, as it would increase access to care, reduce costs, and improve overall health outcomes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions.