HVC meeting 5/4/20 Summary

Speaker: Cathleen Johnson and Jeannie Kunz

Topic: Telehealth Discussion

Summary: A virtual meeting was held via GoTo Meeting with 32 participants to discuss updates that affect occupational therapy practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. Different types of virtual services are defined and can be reimbursed differently. The group reviewed the pandemic timeline as it affected the US starting January 31, 2020 with a public health emergency. On March 27, the CARES Act allowed telehealth restrictions to be waived for Medicaid. As of April 30, rehabilitation professionals were now able to be reimbursed for telehealth services through Medicare. MiOTA is seeking information regarding insurance coverage for COTA services as well as acceptable CPT codes. Accepted and covered CPT codes are currently determined by the specific insurance carrier. Third party payment depends on the carrier. Resources were shared from AOTA including the following decisions guide: <https://www.aota.org/~/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Health/COVID-19-OT-Service-Delivery-Guide.pdf>. See [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org) for more resources, continuing education and information regarding COVID-19. Executive orders have allowed out of state practitioners and students to work in Michigan. The group reviewed the LARA licensing statement. School practitioners should seek guidance from their district for how services should look using the home based learning platforms being submitted to the state. According to the Public Health Code, allied health services are covered if insurance covers it. Therapists do not need a business license to practice telehealth under their employer or contract company. If a practitioner is a business owner, he/she can reach out to the small business association of Michigan for answers to questions and support during this time. To adhere to HIPPA guidelines, practitioners must discuss with their clients a preferred method of information transfer. This can include electronic documentation, phone interviews, or mail (if not time sensitive). Mandatory reporting for suspected abuse and neglect is required under the occupational therapy code of ethics even if not required under Michigan law. MiOTA is lobbying for OT to be added to Michigan’s list of mandatory reporters, and practitioners should be aware that during this high time of stress abuse or neglect may occur. MiOTA is completing a survey to see how the pandemic has affected practice and will be sharing this data once it is gathered. MiOTA will send out a template to follow Medicare’s policy updates once the information is received. Telehealth policies regarding virtual care currently in place are effective only during this time of crisis. Such policies may change once the pandemic is over. All are welcome to email MiOTA with any questions at office@miota.org. If you participated in a chapter meeting and would like to redeem your 25% discount on the MiOTA membership fee please send an email to office@miota.org.

Announcements

The annual MiOTA conference at the Radisson Plaza in Kalamazoo will be held Sept. 24-28. The conference will be transitioned to a virtual platform if necessary. Sponsors may register here:

<https://www.miota.org/exhibitors_and_sponsors.php>

The Lyla M. Spelbring Lectureship and Conference will be held at EMU on September 24th: [https://www.spelbringlecture.com](https://www.spelbringlecture.com/)

Join MiOTA to help support the rights of OTs in the state of Michigan as well as receive FREE PDUs! See link for list of benefits and link to join.

<https://www.miota.org/membership_benefits.php>

“Executive Order 2020-61, which temporarily suspends any law or regulation that requires continuing education for a health care professional to gain licensure or renewal of their licensure while the emergency declaration is in effect.

Through May 12, 2020, LARA may recognize hours worked responding to the COVID-19 emergency as hours toward continuing education courses or programs required for licensure.

MCL 333.16205 of the Michigan Public Health Code affords licensees the ability to request a waiver of continuing education by the Board.” (MiOTA email communication April 30, 2020)

Please contact co-leaders Adrienna Bartnicki at adriennajulien@gmail.com or Juliane Chreston at juliane.chreston@cuaa.edu with any questions regarding the Huron Valley Chapter of the Michigan Occupational Therapy Association.