

Medicare Telemedicine Snapshot Data Dictionary

Term Name	Variable Name	Definition
Time Frame	Time_Frame	The data is aggregated to two time-periods: Part B Claims pulled from Pre-Pandemic timeperiod (March 2019 - February 2020) and the Pandemic timeperiod (March 2020-February 2021).
Telemedicine Service Type	TM_Srvc_Type	There are three main types of virtual telemedicine services that are summarized: Medicare telehealth visits (including audio-only telehealth), virtual check-ins and e-visits. The category 'All Telemedicine' groups all three types of services together.
Year	Time_Frame_Yr	Identifies the data year from which the Part B Medicare claims were pulled. 'Entire Period' identifies either the Pre-Pandemic or Pandemic timeperiod and can cross multiple months and years of claims data.
Month	Time_Frame_Mth	Identifies the data month from which the Part B claims were pulled. 'Entire Period' identifies either the Pre-Pandemic or Pandemic timeperiod and can cross multiple months and years of claims data.
State / Territory	Bene_Geo_Desc	The data is aggregated to the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, and a "Territories" category (all other outlying areas of the US). The state of the beneficiary is based on mailing address. If a beneficiary's state of residence is unknown, the beneficiary is assigned to the "Missing Data" category. Data aggregated at the National level are identified by "National".
Medicaid Eligibility Status	Bene_Mdcd_Mdcr_Enrl_Stus	A beneficiary can be eligible for Medicare and/or Medicaid. Beneficiaries enrolled in both Medicare and Medicaid simultaneously at any time during the snapshot time period are considered Dual Medicare and Medicaid. A beneficiary enrolled in Medicare alone is Medicare Only. Please note that for beneficiaries enrolled in both Medicare and Medicaid, only claims and encounters covered by Medicare are included in this reporting.
Race/ Ethnicity	Bene_Race_Desc	In the snapshot, a beneficiary's race/ ethnicity is created by taking the beneficiary race code that has historically been used by the Social Security Administration (and is in turn used in CMS's enrollment database) and applying an algorithm that improves the race/ethnicity classification, particularly for those who are Hispanic or Asian/Pacific Islander. This algorithm, developed by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and is thus often referred to as the "RTI race code", uses Census surname lists for Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander origin as well as geography. The race/ethnicity classifications are: American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), White, Black/African American, Asian/ Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Other/Unknown. For more information on the RTI race algorithm, see https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4195038/ .
Beneficiary Sex	Bene_Sex_Desc	A beneficiary's sex is available from the CMS enrollment database and is classified as Male/Female.
Medicare Entitlement	Bene_Mdcr_Entlmt_Stus	Medicare entitlement is available to three basic groups of "insured individuals" - the Aged, the Disabled, and those with end stage renal disease (ESRD). Medicare entitlement can change over time for beneficiaries that were initially entitled to Medicare because of disability or ESRD before the age of 65. For purposes of this reporting, beneficiaries who at any time during the snapshot time period had ESRD, were Aged with ESRD or were Disabled with ESRD are classified as ESRD; otherwise beneficiaries are classified as Disabled or Aged.
Beneficiary Age	Bene_Age_Desc	A beneficiary's age is measured at the end of the snapshot time period, February 2021.
Rural/ Urban	Bene_RUCA_Desc	Rural/Urban status is defined using the beneficiary's mailing ZIP code and the Rural Urban Commuting Area Crosswalk (RUCA). The RUCA crosswalk relies on commuting data from the US Census, as well as ZIP Codes to define Rural and Urban locations. This definition of rural/urban is different from how Medicare defined rural geographic areas when determining eligibility for payment of telehealth services prior to the pandemic. Telehealth services used to be limited to sites located in either a rural health professional shortage area (HPSA) or counties outside of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) classified HPSAs and the Census Bureau classified MSAs.

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Telemedicine Users	TM_Bene_Cnt	Number of unique Medicare beneficiaries with telemedicine (defined as E-visit, virtual check-in, or telehealth (including audio-only telehealth)). We only include those users where the line payment amount was greater than \$0 or it was an MA claim.
Telemedicine Eligible Users	Tot_Bene_Cnt	Number of unique Medicare beneficiaries who received telemedicine eligible services (via Telemedicine or non-telemedicine). We only include those users where the line payment amount was greater than \$0 or it was an MA claim. We define telemedicine eligible as any E-visit, virtual check-in, or telehealth eligible code identified from the CMS list of covered telehealth services, effective August 2021.
Percentage of Medicare Users with a Telemedicine Service	TM_Bene_Pct	The number of unique Medicare Part B beneficiaries who received at least one telemedicine service divided by the number of unique beneficiaries who received at least one telemedicine eligible service (either in-person or via a telecommunication device). To calculate this measure, we divide Telemedicine Users by Telemedicine Eligible Users.