

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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October 22, 2013

(504) _____

RE:
Telemedicine and Health Plan Utilization

During its meeting on September 16, 2013, the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board"), considered your letter of August 21, 2013, detailing the informal advice previously provided to you by its Executive Director, Cecilia Mouton, M.D., concerning certain practices that involve the use of video conferencing which do not strictly comply with our Telemedicine Rules.¹

The Board asked that I acknowledge and thank you for your request and advise you that in scenarios 1 and 2 your communication accurately captures its views. However, the Board wanted me to note that its opinion is predicated on the understanding that BCBS network physicians would only use video conferencing with their *established patients*. The Board would not, that is, anticipate that video conferencing would be used to establish a new patient/physician relationship, address any condition that would require a physical examination or provide emergent care. The Board's opinion is also based on the understanding that the patient will always have the option of being seen by a network provider if the patient or provider believes that the complaints warrant a face-to-face interaction and/or physical examination.

Provided that our understanding of the BCBS's plans under scenarios 1 and 2 are accurate, and considering that what you propose is similar to the manner by which most physicians have traditionally utilized telephone or e-mail to follow-up with established patients, the Board agreed that it would not be necessary to strictly comply with its Telemedicine Rules in scenarios 1 and 2 as described in your letter.² The Board also agreed with your observations concerning scenarios 3 and 4.

¹LAC 46:XLV.7501-7521.

²The Board's views also presume that new prescriptions for controlled substances are not prescribed via video conferencing and asked that I specifically advise you that the views expressed in this letter do not include, and it has not authorized, the use of video conferencing for the treatment of chronic pain or obesity, as set forth in §§6915-6923 and §§6901-6913 of the Board's rules.

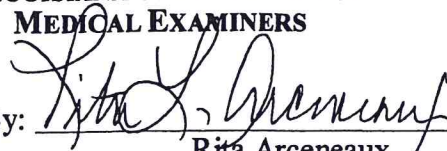
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Finally, the Board wanted me to advise you that in due course it plans to provide guidance on these issues on its website.

Very truly yours,

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

By: _____



Rita Arceneaux
Confidential Executive Assistant