

# **Expanding Telehealth** in Texas

Antiquated telehealth laws in Texas make it illegal for doctors to talk to their patients when the doctor is out of the state.

This is a problem that compounds the critical shortage of care options for Texans with chronic health conditions or disabilities.

And for those in rural areas, the crisis is even worse.



The Lone Star State is now **short more than 20,000 doctors**, yet only has 334 residency slots available a year.

#### 224 of Texas' 254 counties

are health professional shortage areas (HPSA) which means most areas in the state do not have one provider for every 3,500 residents.



This dire situation leaves many patients with a difficult choice:



-OR-



Choose higher-cost alternatives such as urgent care or the emergency room

Allowing patients greater access to providers via telehealth would help alleviate the shortage, but there is a patchwork of rules prohibiting it.



### THE SOLUTION

Texas can create a simple registration system for all licensed providers to be available as a new option for patients to access care over telehealth.

This is a proven model that has expanded care in a diverse group of states. **Arizona**, **Delaware**, **Florida**, **Indiana**, **Louisiana**, **Utah**, **Vermont**, and **Washington** have all been offering their patients this telehealth option for years for all provider types.

# **WHY IT MATTERS**

Registering doctors would comply with the state's scope of practice and standards.

Telehealth leads to patient-centered care at home, in the office, or in a medical setting—whichever is best. Providers can see more patients at their convenience and patients get flexibility in where they receive care.



# THE BOTTOM LINE:

Geography should not determine a patient's health destiny. Interstate telehealth helps patients access more high-quality care options.