May 19, 2020

The Honorable Kim Schrier, MD  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1123 Longworth H.O.B  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Phil Roe, MD  
U.S. House of Representatives  
102 Cannon H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Schrier and Roe:

On behalf of the more than 82,000 members of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), I write in support of the Health Care at Home Act (H.R. 6644). This important legislation would establish payment parity between telehealth and in-office visits by requiring private payers, including employer-provided plans under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), to reimburse telehealth services for normally covered benefits at the same rate as if they were office visits during the declared COVID-19 public health emergency.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has made several important regulatory changes to ease regulatory barriers to telehealth and enforce payment parity for telehealth visits during the declared COVID-19 public health emergency for Medicare beneficiaries. But private payers, including employer-provided ERISA health plans, have not necessarily followed suit. Aligning private payer policies with Medicare is vital as the use of telehealth and other virtual services is critical to reducing patient and physician exposure to COVID-19 and ensuring continuity of care for patients during this public health emergency.

The ACS strongly supports the Health Care at Home Act and believes that reimbursing telehealth services at the same rate as in-person care would increase access to care during the declared COVID-19 public health emergency. Thank you for your efforts and continued leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS  
Executive Director