Our Mission: To drive efforts to cure psoriatic

disease and improve the lives of those affected.

June 22nd, 2020

Honorable Jared Polis

Governor of Colorado

200 E. Colfax Ave. Rm. 136

Denver CO 80203

**RE: Support SB 20-212 Reimbursement for Telehealth Services**

Governor Polis,

The National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) is a non-profit organization with a mission to drive efforts to cure psoriatic disease and improve the lives of those affected. The NPF is the leading patient advocacy group for more than 8.3 million Americans and the more than 140,000 Colorado residents living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. I write to you today to express our support for SB 20-212 and its timely need in our current public health emergency.

Each day, our patients face the reality of barriers to health care that impact their treatment, health, and well-being. Due to the heterogeneous nature of psoriatic disease, patients need access to a broad range of health care services and treatment choices, making a one-size-fits-all approach harmful for patients. Without proper treatment, patients with chronic conditions like psoriatic disease may experience otherwise preventable health events, resulting in more doctor visits or hospitalization.

The expansion of telehealth has radically broadened access to high-quality health care opportunities. Telehealth has fostered expanded delivery of health care services and can improved efficiency and collaboration of care. A 2018 study of patients with psoriasis randomly assigned to in-person or online care for 12 months found that the online program- rooted in a collaborative care model0 was as effective as the in-person care.[[1]](#endnote-1)

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on existing issues with our current health care system. Such impediments to care are challenging under normal circumstances and are exponentially more daunting during a public health crisis where our health care system is under an enormous strain. In a pandemic, where there is limited staff, resources, and time, providers and patients need increased access to health care services. A consumer survey from March 2020 found that, while only 25% have used telehealth in the past, 59% are interested in using telehealth in the future and 36% would even switch their physician to access virtual care.ii

SB 20-212 would make permeant the enhanced usability of telehealth and make permeant access that was granted in executive order 2020-20.

Telehealth does not replace the need for in person visits; however, providers should have the entire panoply of treatment options, including telehealth, available when treating psoriatic disease patients. Telehealth has the potential to alleviate these barriers for patients with psoriatic disease and other chronic conditions. Furthermore, consumer surveys have shown patients are interested in utilizing telehealth. In fact, a 2019 survey found that 66% of consumers are willing to use telehealth and 67% of seniors want telehealth for chronic disease management.iii

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please reach out at [bduffy-goche@psoriasis.org](mailto:bduffy-goche@psoriasis.org).

Sincerely,

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Brittany Duffy-Goche

State Government Relations Manager

1. Armstrong AW, Chambers CJ, Maverakis E, et all. JAMA Netw Open. 2018 Oct; 1(6): e183062. Published online 2018 Oct 5. doi: 10.1001/jamanetw orkopen.2018.3062

   ii Sage Growth/Blackbook Research. March 27, 2020. COVID-19 Market Pulse. <https://blackbookmarketresearch.com/administrator/img/0188_SGP_COVID-19%20Market%20Pulse_r2.pdf>

   iii American Well. Telehealth Index: 2019 Consumer Survey. https://static.americanwell.com/app/uploads/2019/07/American-Well-Telehealth-Index-2019-Consumer-Survey-eBook2.pdf  [↑](#endnote-ref-1)