

## Remote Support Draft TBI Waiver Service Definition

***This draft service definition is a part of the TBI Waiver submitted to CMS that is pending approval.***

Remote support is a service delivery for beneficiaries, 18 and older, who are able to follow verbal prompts, have a desire to enhance their independent living skills and who are selecting an alternative option to increase their independence. Remote support means the support of a beneficiary through staff working from a remote location using one or more modes of remote support equipment systems. The purpose of remote supports is to enable beneficiaries to exercise greater independence over their lives and promote community inclusion. All Remote Support systems shall utilize assistive technology that can engage in live two-way communication with or without real-time video observation of the beneficiary. Any specific needs related to ongoing remote supervision should be outlined within the beneficiary's Individual Support Plan (ISP). The ISP should contain all coverage needs to include the hours of remote support coverage.

Remote support equipment is used to operate systems such as live video feed, live audio feed, motion sensing system, radio frequency identification, web-based support systems, or another approved assistive technology device. All remote support systems must have the ability to engage in live two-way communication with the beneficiary being remotely supervised based on their support needs identified during the person-centered planning process. The physical location of a provider's support base cannot be located at the home of the beneficiary nor their family member who receives remote support service.

### Expected Outcomes

Remote Support allows beneficiaries to remain safely in their homes. Remote Support helps to promote self-determination, enhances privacy through providing services in the less restrictive level of care, and permits supervision as needed by remote observation. The goal of this service is to allow the flexibility of remote supervision when direction supervision is not required, thus encouraging independence while still providing a safe environment for the beneficiary.

The intended outcome of Remote Support is the following:

- A. To increase or maintain the beneficiary's level of independence,
- B. Provide the supervision needed,
- C. Maximize self-sufficiency,
- D. Increase self-determination, and
- E. Ensure the beneficiary's opportunity to have full membership in his/her community.

## Service Type and Setting

Remote Support is a 24-hour a day service. This service is provided through the use of remote support technology in the beneficiary's home and/or community. Through the use of remote support technology, direct support professionals provide live support as outlined within the ISP. It is important to note that Remote support service is done in real time (not via a recording) by awake staff at a support base using the appropriate connection. While remote support is being provided, the remote support staff are not to have duties other than remote support. Provider agencies and vendors are required to meet all service type and setting requirements outlined under program requirements.

## Program Requirements

Remote Support is designed to be a supportive therapeutic relationship between the provider and the beneficiary which addresses and/or implements interventions outlined in the ISP. The beneficiary's or ISP shall be amended to include remote supports:

- A. A statement in the ISP to justify the rationale for remote support, such as how it benefits the beneficiary, assures health and safety and/or promotes independence.
- B. Updated risk assessment specific to remote support shall be attached to the support plan.
- C. A description of the remote support equipment being used which includes the function/purpose of any assistive technology devices or software, identifies the general location of equipment and addresses the beneficiary's and family's knowledge of how to use.
- D. A detailed back-up plan in the event of system failure or power outage should outline the responsibilities of both the remote support vendor and the provider agency.
- E. The following shall also be in place:
  1. There must be a written response protocol listed in the ISP which outlines the remote support vendor's procedure and provider agency's procedures for when the beneficiary triggers an event for assistance, or an alert is received.
  2. The remote support vendor shall have an effective system for notifying emergency personnel such as mental health crisis response entities, fire, and police.
  3. There must be a written emergency response protocol that outlines the responsibilities of the remote support vendor, as well as the responder.
  4. The emergency plan can include natural supports or paid supports.
- F. Updated emergency response plan shall include, at a minimum, a description of:
  1. The types of responses that are deemed to be in person/face-to-face, telehealth or telephonic
  2. The number and type of back-up responder (natural supports and/or staff).

3. The expected response time of the back-up responders to respond

In situations not included in the ISP or Emergency Plan, the remote support staff or vendor who receives the alert should determine how to best respond to the beneficiary's support needs at that time to ensure health and safety. The beneficiary and guardian/family should be notified immediately of any decisions made outside of the ISP. The ISP should be updated within 30 days to include a protocol to address similar situations in the future.

G. When a beneficiary needs assistance but the situation is not an emergency, the remote support staff shall:

1. Address the situation as specified in the beneficiary's beneficiary support plan for a beneficiary who receives remote support with unpaid backup support; OR

Contact the paid back-up support for a beneficiary who receives remote support with paid backup supports.

2. The remote support staff shall have detailed and current written protocols for responding to a beneficiary's needs as specified in the ISP, including contact information for the backup support person or direct support professional to provide assistance if deemed appropriate.

3. The beneficiary's ISP shall describe steps to be followed should the beneficiary request that the equipment used for delivery of remote support be turned off.

F. When overnight support staff is needed, the ISP specifies the need for overnight support staff. It should address how the service would ensure the beneficiary's service needs are being met and that health and welfare are being addressed adequately.

#### INFORMED CONSENT:

A. To address potential issues of privacy, informed consent for using this service versus traditional service options. Informed consent shall be documented in the ISP.

B. Live video feed cameras will only be set up in common areas; never in a location where there is an expectation of privacy, such as a bedroom or bathroom. If for health and safety reasons, supervision is required in the bedroom or bathroom, alternative assistive technology shall be utilized to protect the privacy and dignity of the beneficiary requesting or needing supervision.

C. When Remote Support involves the use of audio or video equipment that enables Remote Support staff to view or listen in on activities within the home, a notice shall be prominently displayed within the entry way of the residence and near each camera or listening device. This notice shall include accessible language that advises occupants and visitors that the home is equipped with audio and/or video equipment that permits others to view activities and/or listen to conversations.

D. The beneficiary who receives the service and each beneficiary who lives in the home is to provide consent in writing, after being fully informed of what Remote Support entails including; but not limited to, that the Remote Support staff has the ability to and will observe their activities and/or listen to their conversations within the home, where within the residence the Remote Support will take place, and whether or not recordings will be made. If the beneficiary receiving Remote Support or another beneficiary who lives in the home, has a guardian, the guardian must also consent in writing.

Vendor or Provider Safeguards:

A. In the event of electrical outages or failure, the provider of the assistive technology or Remote Support must have a backup power system. The provider must also have other backup systems and additional safeguards in place which include, but are not limited to, contacting the backup support responder to provide in-person support in the event the assistive technology and/or Remote Support equipment stops working for any reason.

B. If the beneficiary receiving the service indicates s/he wants the Remote Support equipment turned off or disabled; temporarily or permanently, the following protocol is to be implemented:

1. The Remote Support staff is to contact the backup support responder and request in-person assistance at the beneficiary's current home as notated in the beneficiary's person-centered plan/beneficiary support plan.

2. The Remote Support equipment shall remain in operation until the backup support responders arrives.

3. If no one else at the location is receiving Remote Support, the Remote Support staff will turn off the system once the backup support responder arrives at the location and is briefed on the situation. The ISP should be updated accordingly.

C. Remote support service vendors shall maintain record of monitoring services for seven years.

D. A secure network system requiring authentication, authorization, and encryption of data that complies with HIPAA requirements.

E. Monthly testing of the assistive technology shall be completed to ensure it is in good working condition and used appropriately by the beneficiary receiving the service. For Remote Support equipment that is in daily use, there shall be a means to continuously monitor the functioning of the equipment and a policy or plan in place to address malfunctions.

F. If the evaluation identifies a need for Remote Support, ensure the Remote Support equipment meets the following criteria:

1. Includes an indicator that lets the beneficiary using the equipment know that it is on and operating. The indicator shall be appropriate to meet the beneficiary's needs;

2. Is designed so that it can be turned off only by the beneficiary (s) indicated in the beneficiary support plan;

3. Has 99% system uptime that includes adequate redundancy;

4. Has adequate redundancy that ensures critical system functions are restored within three hours of a failure. If a service is not available, the beneficiary and provider must be alerted within ten minutes.

G. If the evaluation identifies the need for a staffed call center, a backup plan must be in place that meets the beneficiary's needs. In the most demanding situations, that may mean there is another call center that is part of a network. In less demanding situations, it may be an alternate location that can become operational within a timeframe that meets the beneficiary's needs and is specified within the plan. In any event, an adequate "system down" plan must be in place.

H. There shall be a mechanism to alert staff when a power outage occurs that provides a low battery alert, and an alert if the system may go or goes down so that back-up support, if required, is in place until service is restored.

I. A main hub, if required, must be able to connect to the internet via one or more different methods; hard-wired, wireless, or cellular. The main hub must also be able to send via one or more different modes of notification (i.e. text, email, or audio), as well as the ability, to connect to an automated or customer support call center that is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The provider/vendor determines main hub location. The location cannot be within a beneficiary's residence.

J. Has a latency of no more than 10 minutes from when an event occurs to when the notification is sent via text, email or audio contingent upon the beneficiary's needs.

K. Has the capability to include environmental controls that can be added on and controlled by the identified beneficiary in the support plan.

L. Have a battery life expectancy lasting six months or longer, has a low battery notification and have a battery replacement policy.

M. Response timeframes are beneficiary-specific and outlined within their support plan and not to exceed 30 minutes.

N. The vendor of the remote support system must have an effective means for notifying emergency personnel, such as fire, emergency medical services, and mental health crisis response entities, police as soon as possible.

O. If an emergency arises at a beneficiary's residence, the remote support staff will immediately assess the situation and call emergency personnel first, if it is deemed necessary, and then contact the backup responder to notify of the emergency event. The Remote Support staff will stay engaged with the beneficiary during an emergency until emergency personnel or the backup support arrives.

P. The backup responder is to acknowledge receipt of a request for assistance from the Remote Support staff.

Q. The backup support responder must arrive at the beneficiary's home within a reasonable amount of time (to be specified in the ISP but not to exceed 30 minutes) when a request for beneficiary assistance is made.

EPSDT benefits will be exhausted prior to waiver service use for individuals under 21 years old.

Exclusions:

- a. Items that are not of direct or remedial benefit to the person are excluded from this service
- b. Remote Supports is not intended for convenience of the beneficiary's caretaker or the provider.
- c. Remote supports shall not be utilized for individuals where remote supports is contraindicated.

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