

## REP. KATE HOGAN'S SENIOR NEWS



### Taking Care of Your Health During the Pandemic

I hope that you – and those you care about – are healthy and safe. I want to share an update on one of the health innovations that started during the pandemic that has been successful and can have a positive impact on seniors: telehealth.

Some of you may have experienced telehealth, or the delivery of health care via audio, visual or instant messaging/online chat connection. If so, I hope the experience was a good one. Telehealth can be delivered by your regular doctor, in which case you may be required to sign up for their office's secure technology platform. It can also be done informally, such as when some senior centers offer their regular health and fitness classes via video.

Even in their infancy, telehealth visits have been increasingly successful during the COVID-19 pandemic - especially for dealing with chronic and mental health issues.

With this in mind, my colleagues and I included support for telehealth in our recent healthcare reform bill, *H.4888 An Act to promote resilience in our healthcare system*. This bill extends insurance coverage for primary care and chronic disease management at the same rate as in-person service for one year. It permanently extends coverage for behavioral telehealth services, over both phone and video, at the same rate as in-person care.

The House bill also includes provisions for stabilizing the hospitals that have been hardest hit during the COVID-19 pandemic by infusing additional cash into financially strapped community hospitals, including Emerson Hospital and UMass Memorial-Marlborough Hospital. The bill is going to be reviewed by a conference committee and is one of the priority bills that will be voted on when the House returns to formal votes in the fall.

Another way to stay healthy is to get outside. Our local outdoor spaces are a great way to enjoy the fall in the District and we have many options to choose from. Maynard's scenic rail trail is ADA-compliant and accessible for seniors, and the kayak and canoe launch at Ice House Landing has a paved walkway and accessible parking.

Our district has many resources to help seniors and their families stay healthy and well during these unprecedented times, including our amazing Councils on Aging, of course!

**Contact Rep. Hogan:** Virtual office hours for constituents will be held September 17 beginning at 6 pm. Residents may meet with Rep. Hogan by appointment via Zoom or telephone. To schedule an appointment, please call (617) 722-2199 (option #3) to leave a voicemail or email [kate.hogan@mahouse.gov](mailto:kate.hogan@mahouse.gov). If you are unable to attend office hours and have any issues or concerns, please contact Rep. Hogan as noted.

Kate Hogan, State Representative  
Proudly represents Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow

State House, Room 163, Boston, MA, 02133 / Phone: (617) 722-2199 / [Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov](mailto:Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov)

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District Office: Maynard Town Hall, 195 Main Street, Maynard, MA 01754 / Phone: (978) 897-1333