

What the Public Health Emergency has Taught Us About Sustaining Telehealth

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WyTN is a collaboration between the Wyoming Department of Health divisions of Medicaid and Rural Health and the University of Wyoming through the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities.



College of Health Sciences
Wyoming Institute
for Disabilities



Introductions & Welcome



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Objectives

1. Provide national findings on the effectiveness of telehealth provided during the Public Health Emergency including return on investment
2. Explain “what’s next” in sustainable implementation of telehealth in the future
3. Provide examples of how telehealth implementation during the pandemic shifted the healthcare landscape
4. Instruct on best practice models for telehealth implementation and sustainability
5. Understand the programs and impact of the Wyoming Telehealth Network

Wyoming Telehealth Network (WyTN)

The Wyoming Telehealth Network (WyTN) supports healthcare entities, providers, and specialists increase access to care and improve health outcomes for Wyoming residents, through professional development, collaboration, and leveraging of telecommunications technology.

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers



Regionals



Nationals



Patient Benefits of Telehealth

- Studies have shown that recovery is faster when patients are close to home.
- The decrease in travel costs and the danger of traveling in hazardous weather is removed
- Patients don't need to take whole days off work to see a specialist or to take their children to the doctor
- Children miss less school when they can be seen via Telehealth
- Patients may receive care sooner, avoiding escalation of illness and overall healthcare costs

Provider's Benefit of Telehealth

- Specialists save hours traveling to see patients
- Practices are more efficient
- Providers can serve more patients, thus easing provider shortages
- Rural providers can receive continuing education with Telehealth connections, avoiding travel time and out-of-practice time
- Quicker access to specialty providers for consults
- Reduced costs for emergency transport possible

Return on Investment (ROI) for Telehealth

Thota et al. (2020)

Examined telehealth for cancer patients in rural Utah

- Patients saved on time and travel-related expenses
- Saved an average of 4h40min, 332mi roundtrip per encounter
- Patient savings estimated to be \$333,074
- Local hospital saved \$3,605,500 over four years

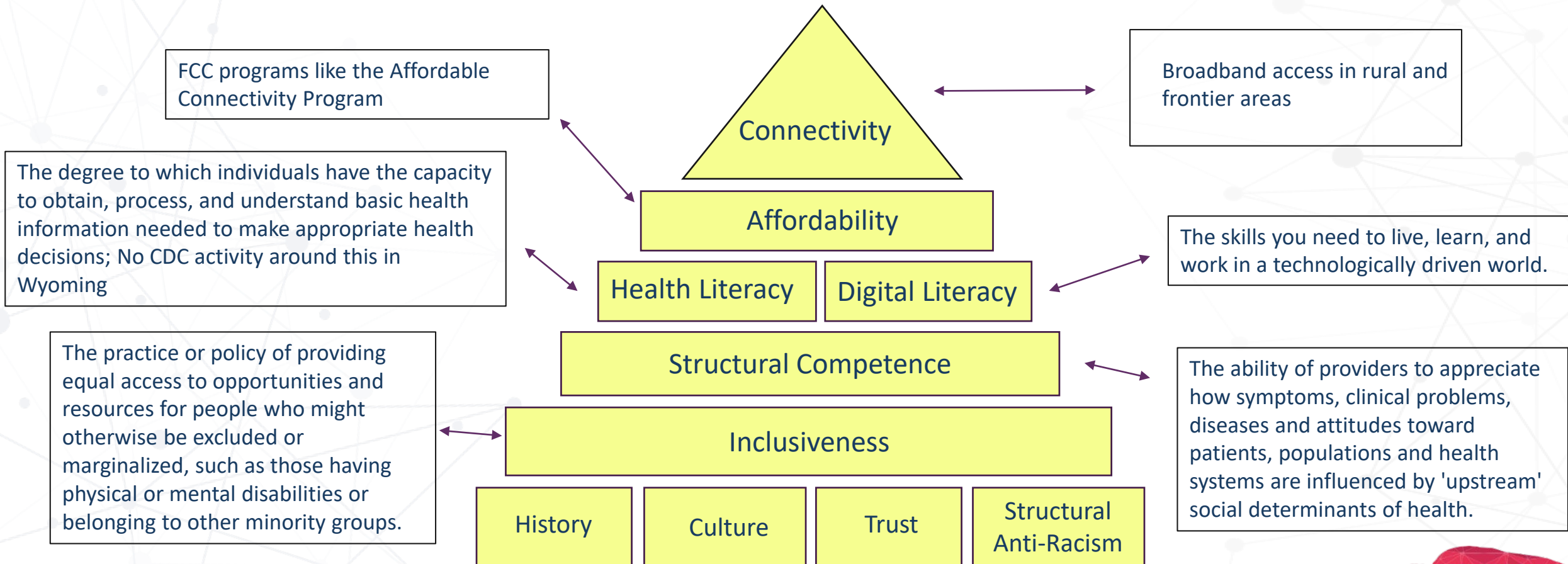
Return on Investment (ROI) for Telehealth

Hilt et al. (2015)

Examined cost savings for a statewide child telepsychiatry system in Wyoming

- Implementation resulted in a 1.82 to 1 return on investment
- Costs avoided: \$2,481,952
- Operating expenses: \$881,000
- Net savings: \$1,600,952
- Also reduced the number of children taking prescription medications, and redirected children from in-patient treatment to community alternatives

Framework for Eliminating Health Disparities Using Telehealth

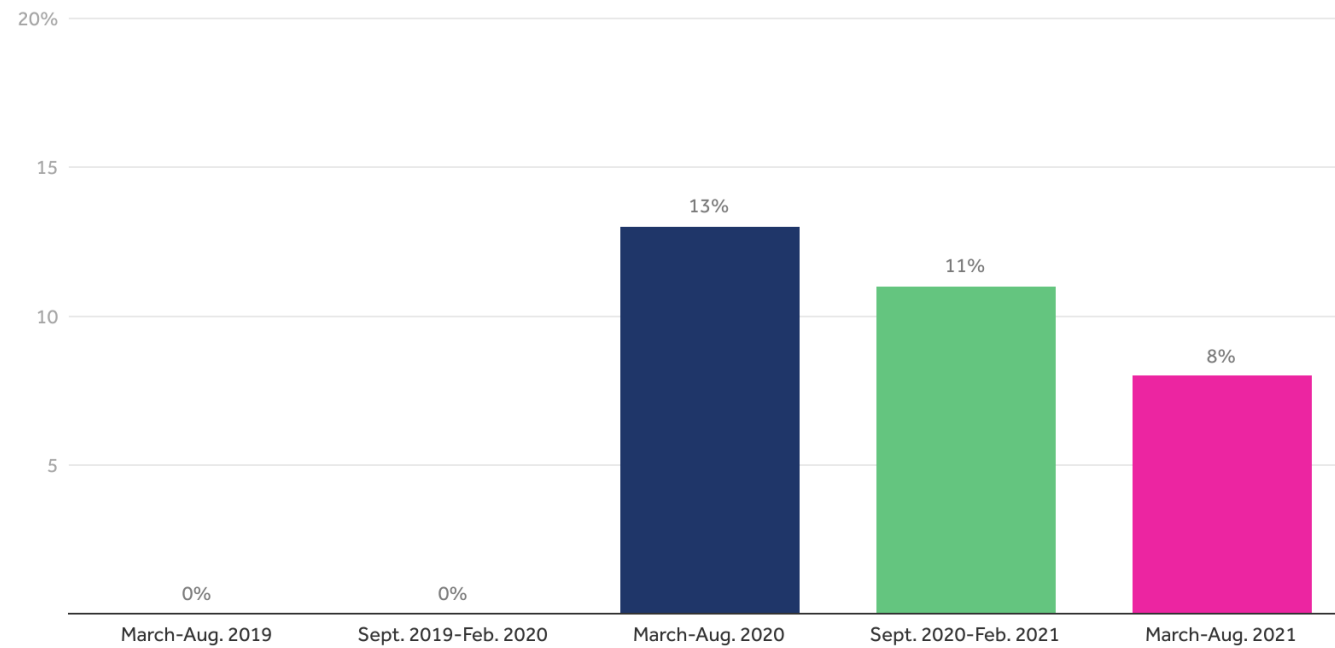


The Shift in the Healthcare Landscape

Telehealth use from March 2019 through August 2021 using data from Cosmos, a HIPAA-defined Limited Data Set of more than 126 million patients from over 156 Epic organizations, including 889 hospitals and 19,420 clinics across all 50 states.

<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/outpatient-telehealth-use-soared-early-in-the-covid-19-pandemic-but-has-since-receded/#findings>

Share of outpatient visits by telehealth, 2019-2021



Source: KFF and Epic Research analysis of Cosmos data

Peterson-KFF
Health System Tracker EPIC RESEARCH

Telehealth Utilization Continues Even as Public Health Emergencies Are Lifted at the State Level

- **Telehealth Utilization Rose 1.9% Nationally in Telehealth Utilization Rose 1.9% Nationally in July: Telehealth usage jumped slightly in July relative to June, making up 5.3 percent of medical claim lines nationally, new data shows.**

https://mhealthintelligence.com/news/telehealth-utilization-rose-1.9-nationally-in-july?eid=CXTEL000000663681&elqCampaignId=27923&utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter&elqTrackId=36fa35a9448b4b538a9d84d5b530ea73&elq=9166af15179547cbaf6d8388d9486837&elqaid=28776&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=27923

Patient Satisfaction with Telehealth

- **Patient Experience in Virtual Visits Hinges on Technology and the Patient-Clinician Relationship:** <https://www.jmir.org/2021/6/e18488/>
- The survey asked patients about convenience, how the virtual visit compared to an in-person visit, and the likelihood of using virtual care again. More than 80 percent of patients agreed or strongly agreed that their virtual visit was as good as an in-person visit, with 53.2 percent indicating that the experience was better than an in-person visit.
- The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the virtual visit made it easy to get the care they needed and the visit saved them time (90.9 percent and 91.9 percent, respectively). Most of the patients (92.9 percent) responded that they would attend a virtual visit again for a healthcare need. The average overall satisfaction score, using the Likert scale, was 4.4 out of 5.

Provider Satisfaction with Telehealth

- In a recent Mayo Clinic study, more than 75% of respondents said telehealth enabled them to provide quality care for COVID-19-related care, acute care, chronic disease management, hospital/emergency department follow-up, care coordination, preventative care, and mental/behavioral health.
<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/nationwide-survey-finds-physician-satisfaction-with-telehealth/>
- Further, studies have shown physicians felt that telemedicine increased flexibility and control over patient care activities, reporting improved work-life balance and improved burnout symptoms.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2542454821001028>

If Telehealth Is So Great, Why Is Are There Still Barriers to Embracing Its Promise?

- Getting started can be cumbersome. That's why organizations like the Wyoming Telehealth Network Exist! We can help you with everything from implementation to sustainability of your telehealth program!

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Continuity of care:** <https://pnwmsrj.org/meta-analysis/2020/10/telehealth-applications-on-continuity-of-care-quality-of-care-and-patient-satisfaction-in-the-united-states/>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Licensure:** http://www.uwyo.edu/wind/files/docs/wytn-doc/toolkit-docs/regs_guidelines.pdf
- **Wyoming Board of Medicine:** <https://wyomedboard.wyo.gov/>
- **Interstate Compact:** <https://www.imlcc.org/>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Legal Considerations:** <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/legal-considerations/>
- **HIPPA Security Considerations:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/wind/files/docs/wytn-doc/toolkit-docs/hipaa-checklist-2022.pdf>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Reimbursement Guides:**

<https://nrtrc.org/resources/downloads/Telehealth-Services-Codes.pdf>

- **State Telehealth Laws and Reimbursement:**

https://www.cchpca.org/2022/05/Spring2022_SummaryChartfinal.pdf

- **WyTN Billing and Coding Webinars:**

<https://wyomingtelehealth.org/webinars/>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Forming a team, defining goals and assessing your program needs:**
<https://nrtrc.org/resources/downloads/Telehealth-Program-Assessment-FINAL.pdf>
- **Critical Access Hospital Telehealth Guide:**
<https://www.ruralcenter.org/resource-library/cah-telehealth-guide>

Platforms: Who needs them and why?

Telehealth Provider – Primary Care



Telehealth Platform Vendor



Telehealth Provider – Specialty



Telehealth Provider – Comprehensive



Remote Patient Monitoring



Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Choosing a platform:** <https://wyomingtelehealth.org/enrollment/>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Designing the workflow:**
<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/planning-your-telehealth-workflow/>
- **Sample Telehealth Scheduling Instructions:**
<http://www.uwyo.edu/wind/files/docs/wytn-doc/toolkit-docs/telehealth-scheduling-instructions.pdf>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Patient Resources:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UAn5dQwhWs>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Implementing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwJAkzd6lag>

Nuts and Bolts of Telehealth

- **Evaluation:**

<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/telehealth/5/evaluation-measures#:~:text=For%20telehealth%20programs%2C%20non%2Dstandard,may%20vary%20in%20target%20audience.>

Affordable Connectivity Program

- <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>

Other Considerations To Get Set-Up

- Readiness checklist: <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/preparing-patients-for-telehealth/>
- “Webside” manner: <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-04/telehealth-appendix-g4-telehealth-visit-etiquette-checklist.pdf>
- Consent to treat: http://www.uwyo.edu/wind/files/docs/wytn-doc/toolkit-docs/telehealth_consent.pdf
- Patient etiquette: <https://telehealthresourcecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Telehealth-Etiquette-Checklist.pdf>
- Patient Readiness: <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/preparing-patients-for-telehealth/>

WyTN Programming

HIPAA-secure
Zoom™ licenses

Telehealth
Consortium

Special Interest
Groups

Education:
webinars, toolkits,
guides

Consulting and
technical
assistance

Telehealth
Provider Directory

WyTN Innovations

- Utilizing Special Interest Groups to identify and overcome barriers: <https://wyomingtelehealth.org/special-interest-groups/>
- Project AWARE and School Based Telehealth: https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/school-based-telehealth/?utm_campaign=OATannouncements20220927&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery
- The Wyoming Telehealth Consortium: <https://wyomingtelehealth.org/consortium/>
- Telehealth in Wyoming's Public Libraries: <https://wyomingtelehealth.org/webinars/>
- Telehealth Awareness Week Earned Media Campaign

So, what can I do today with all this information?

- Consider if you could use telehealth innovations to expand your practice—What sorts of infrastructure and support does your state need to take your telehealth practice to the next level?
- Identify how to get involved in your state.

Telehealth Resources

Telehealth Training

Wyoming Telehealth Network

www.wyomingtelehealth.org

Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center

www.nrtrc.org

Professional Development

National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers
(NCTRC)

www.telehealthresourcecenter.org

Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP)

www.cchp.org

National Telehealth Technology Assessment Center (TTAC)

www.telehealthtechnology.org

Questions?