



Federal Telehealth Research: Efforts to Build the Evidence-Base

SEARCH 2023– The National Telehealth Research Symposium

November 9, 2023

Wakina Scott, PhD, MPH

Deputy Director

Office for the Advancement of Telehealth

Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People



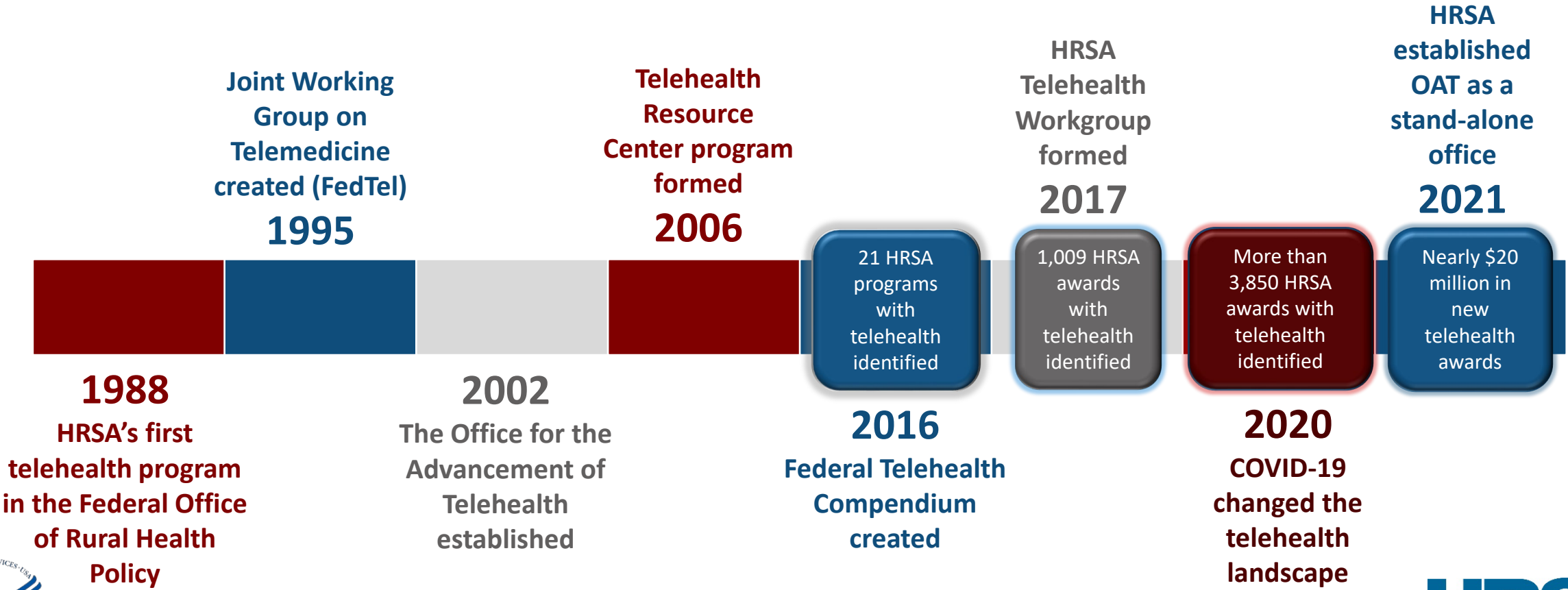
Office for the Advancement of Telehealth (OAT)

- **Serves across HHS** and coordinates with key federal partners to leverage telehealth to improve access, enhance outcomes, and support clinicians and patients
- **Promotes the use of telehealth technologies** for health care delivery, education, and health information services
- **Provides telehealth funding** for direct services, research, and technical assistance



Leadership and History in Telehealth

For over 30 years HRSA has been a leader in the field of telehealth.



OAT Budget

Fiscal Years 2021 - 2023

Telehealth	FY 2021 \$34M	FY 2022 \$35M	FY 2023 \$38M
Telehealth Network Grant Program	\$8.9M	\$8.9M	\$8.9M
Evidence-Based Telehealth Network Program	\$3.8M	\$3.8M	\$3.8M
Telehealth Resource Center Program	\$4.6M	\$4.6M	\$4.6M
Licensure Portability Grant Program	\$0.3M	\$0.3M	\$1.5M
Telehealth Research Center Program	\$2.0M	\$2.0M	\$2.0M
Telehealth Centers of Excellence Program	\$6.5M	\$7.5M	\$8.5M
Telehealth Technology Enabled Learning Program	\$4.2M	\$4.2M	\$4.2M

\$38 million



7 programs

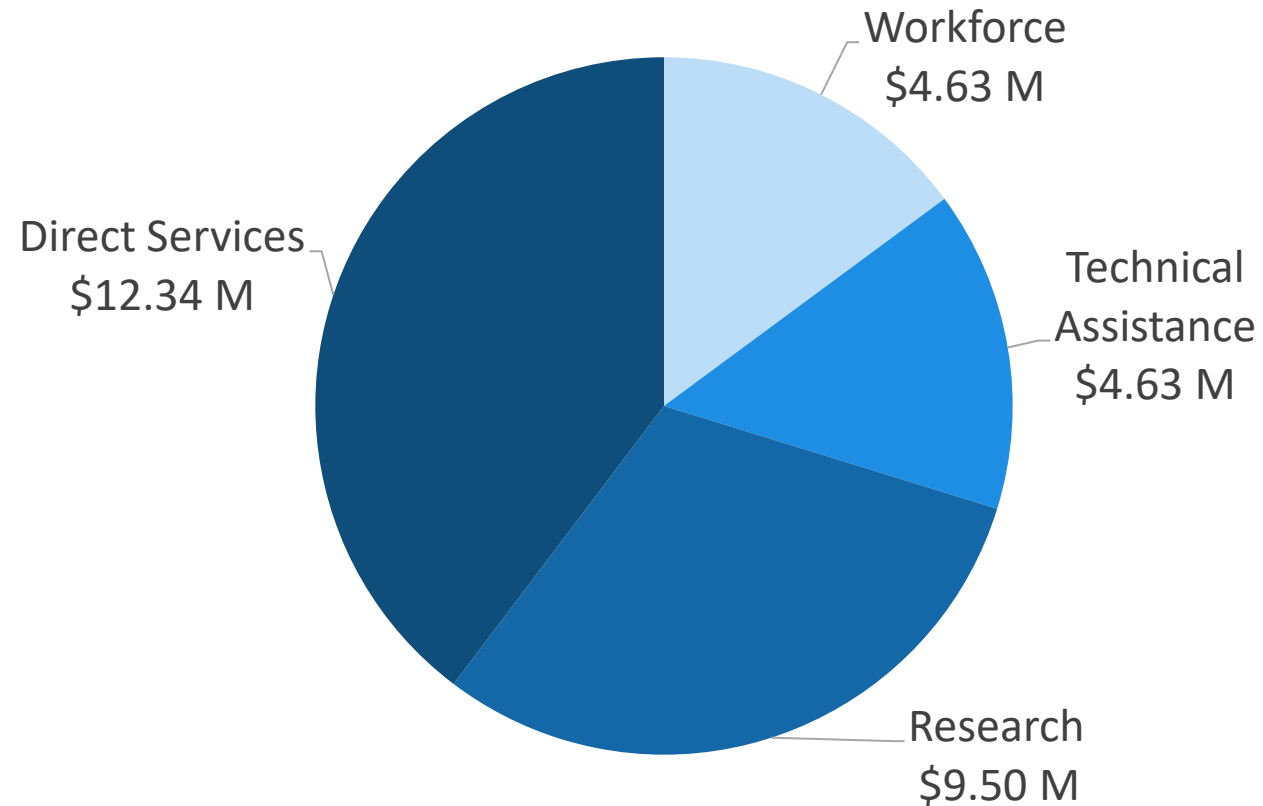


Up to 70 awardees



OAT – Telehealth Investments

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Office for the Advancement of Telehealth funded grants focused on direct services, research, technical assistance, and workforce.



Source: [HRSA Data Warehouse](#)



Building Telehealth Evidence Base



**Telehealth
Centers of
Excellence**



**Telehealth
Research Centers**



**Telehealth
Networks**



**Telehealth
Technology
Enabled Learning
Program**

Telehealth Centers of Excellence Program

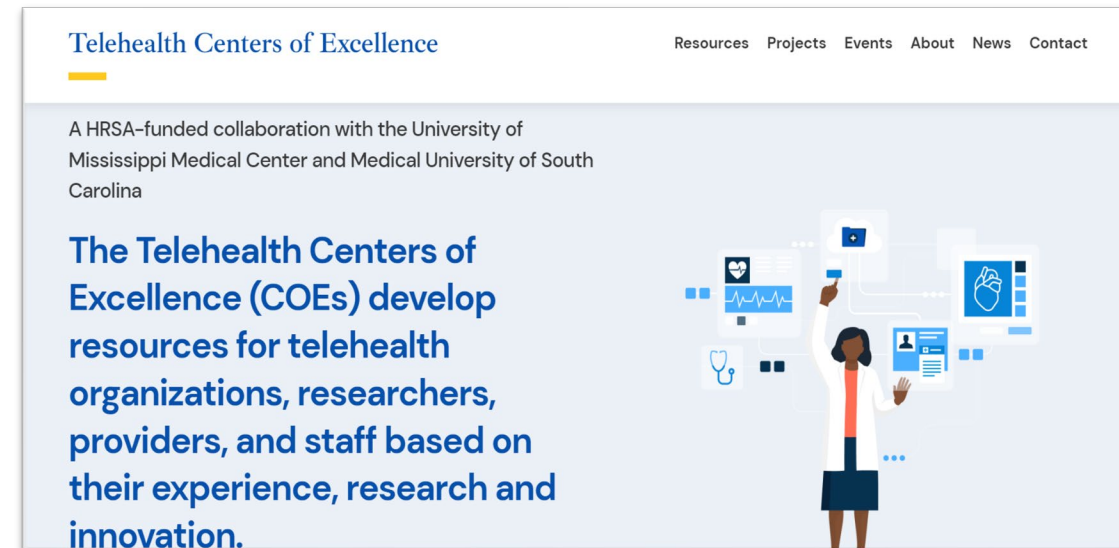
The Telehealth Centers of Excellence examine the **efficacy of telehealth services in rural and urban areas** and serve as a national clearinghouse for **telehealth research and resources**.

OAT funds two COEs:

- University of Mississippi Medical Center
- Medical University of South Carolina

HRSA's telehealth centers of excellence published over **20 articles** to date on topics such as telehealth costs and utilization and remote patient monitoring.

New Website launched in 2022: <https://telehealthcoe.org/>



Telehealth Research Center Program

The **Telehealth Research Centers** conduct and maintain a thorough and comprehensive evaluation of nationwide telehealth investments in rural and underserved areas and populations and conduct clinically-informed and policy-relevant research to expand the evidence-base for rural telehealth services.

OAT funds two Telehealth Research Centers :

- University of Iowa
<https://ruraltelehealth.org/>
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
<https://idhi.uams.edu/rtec/>



From 2021-2023 the Telehealth Focused Rural Health Research Centers had over 15 publications



HHS Telehealth Research Efforts - FY22

- Within HHS, eight agencies engaged in Telehealth Research.
- Over 400 research projects were implemented or planned.



- Target populations included Rural, Urban, Medicaid, Medicare, FQHCs, Tribal, and other special populations.



- The top health focus areas
 - COVID-19
 - Behavioral Health
 - Health Equity
 - Primary Care
 - Specialty Care



HHS Telehealth Research Efforts: Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)

Medicare Telehealth Trends Dashboard

Welcome to this interactive Medicare Telehealth Trends dashboard, developed by ASPE's Office of Health Policy.

Overview

This dashboard uses 2019-2021 Medicare FFS claims data, aggregated by beneficiary characteristics, visit specialty and state to allow users to explore different trends in telehealth use during the COVID-19 pandemic compared with 2019. This tool is intended to provide broad trends in Medicare telehealth use and change over time.

Detailed information about diagnoses, procedures or specific codes are not available in this aggregated dataset. Future updates may include additional variables of interest.

Context

Users should also be aware of the overall decline in health care utilization during the pandemic period compared with 2019 as beneficiaries reduced in-person visits to health care providers. The lower number of total visits results in changes in the denominators over time for reported percentages.

Users should also note drill-down pages into telehealth visits report percent of total telehealth visits, whereas other pages report percent of total visits (in-person and telehealth).

Suggested Citation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Office of Health Policy. Medicare Fee-for-Service Claims 2019-2021. Medicare Telehealth Trends Dashboard. Generated interactively from: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/medicare-dashboard>

	Total Visits
2019	1,120,819,592
2020	994,228,089
2021	1,053,389,364



ISSUE BRIEF
February 1, 2022

HP-2022-04

National Survey Trends in Telehealth Use in 2021: Disparities in Utilization and Audio vs. Video Services

Madjid Karimi, Euny C. Lee, Sara J. Couture, Aldren Gonzales, Violanda Grigorescu, Scott R. Smith, Nancy De Lew, and Benjamin D. Sommers

RESEARCH REPORT
July 20, 2023
HP-2023-18

Updated Medicare FFS Telehealth Trends by Beneficiary Characteristics, Visit Specialty, and State, 2019-2021

Medicare telehealth flexibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic continued to encourage use of telehealth among Medicare beneficiaries in 2021, with telehealth use highest in 2020, decreasing slightly in 2021 and highest use for behavioral health and primary care visits; as in prior years, utilization varied across states.

Loc Wong Samson, Sara J. Couture, Tim B. Creedon, Laura Jacobus-Kantor, Steven Sheingold

State Medicaid Telehealth Coverage Policy Decisions Since the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

ASPE > Reports > State Medicaid Telehealth Coverage Policy Decisions Since the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

PUBLICATION DATE Jul 12, 2023
AUTHORS Peggy G. Chen, Sara E. Heins, and Stephanie Dellva of RAND Corporation

ASPE contracted with RAND Health Care to catalogue and assess state changes to Medicaid telehealth policies during the COVID-19 PHE through May 2022 and identify the driving circumstances, motivations, and evidence supporting telehealth policy decisions during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). The purpose of this study was to review changes to state Medicaid telehealth policies and/or new policies enacted during the COVID-19 PHE, examining policies that were rolled back, as well as those made permanent in part or in whole.

**This content is in the process of Section 508 review. If you need immediate assistance accessing this content, please submit a request to Rose Chu, Rose.Chu@hhs.gov. Content will be updated pending the outcome of the Section 508 review.*

- Related Products:**
- State Medicaid Telehealth Policies Before and During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: 2022 Update
 - State Medicaid Telehealth Policies Before and During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

FILES

- State Medicaid Telehealth (pdf, 1.12 MB)
- Medicaid Telehealth Report Summary (pdf, 752.27 KB)

TOPICS

Telehealth & Virtual Service Delivery | Health Policy

PRODUCT TYPE

Report

POPULATIONS

Low-Income Populations

LOCATION- & GEOGRAPHY-BASED DATA

State Data



Source: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/>



HHS Telehealth Research Efforts: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

The screenshot shows the AHRQ Effective Health Care Program website. The main title is "Improving Rural Health Through Telehealth-Guided Provider-to-Provider Communication". It is a Systematic Review published on Dec 26, 2022. The page includes a "Download Full Content" button, a "Page Contents" section with links to Main Points, Structured Abstract, Journal Citation, and Report Citation, a Project Timeline showing dates from Jan 12, 2021 to Dec 26, 2022, and a Related Resources section mentioning NIH funding. An infographic titled "Telehealth's Potential To Benefit Rural Healthcare Delivery" is also visible.

The screenshot shows the AHRQ Effective Health Care Program website for the report "Use of Telehealth During the COVID-19 Era". It is a Systematic Review published on Jan 3, 2023. The page includes a "Download Full Content" button, a "Page Contents" section with links to Main Points, Structured Abstract, and Report Citation, a Project Timeline showing dates from Mar 9, 2021 to Jan 3, 2023, and a "You Might Also Like" section with links to other reports. A download box lists files: Executive Summary (PDF, 539 KB), Systematic Review (PDF, 10 MB), and Disposition of Comments (PDF, 303 KB). An illustration of a hand holding a smartphone is shown at the bottom.



Source: <https://www.ahrq.gov/>

HHS Telehealth Research Efforts: National Cancer Institute

An official website of the United States government

NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE
Division of Cancer Control & Population Sciences

Search

Healthcare Delivery Research Program

Home Funding Data & Tools Research Networks Areas of Interest News & Events About

NCI Telehealth Research Centers of Excellence (TRACE)

Home / Areas of Interest / Telehealth / NCI Telehealth Research Centers of Excellence (TRACE)

AREAS OF INTEREST

- Advancing Rapid Cycle Research in Cancer Care Delivery
- Addressing Social Risks in Cancer Care +
- Cancer Caregiving +
- Cancer Health Economics Research
- Cancer MoonshotSM Efforts: Federal Cervical Cancer Collaborative (FCCC)
- Healthcare Teams +
- Health of Sexual and Gender Minorities

TRACE Overview

In the United States, there has been a substantial increase in telehealth use in recent years. Research has shown that telehealth can improve healthcare access and quality, patient/provider communication, and health outcomes. Importantly, many aspects of cancer care can be delivered through telehealth, such as promotion of positive health behaviors and cancer screening, remote patient monitoring and management of symptoms during cancer treatment, and virtual survivorship follow-up care. However, large-scale research in diverse clinical settings is needed to optimize the use of telehealth and sustain it as a mode of cancer care delivery, as well as to ensure that cutting-edge findings are quickly adopted into effective and equitable practice.

The National Cancer Institute's Telehealth Research Centers of Excellence (TRACE) Initiative, supported by the Cancer MoonshotSM, funds multiple centers focused on improving people's lives by:

- rapidly developing an evidence base of telehealth approaches to cancer care, spanning prevention to survivorship
- identifying and addressing disparities in access to and use of telehealth

The Cancer MoonshotSM was designed to accelerate efforts to prevent, diagnose, and treat cancer and achieve 10 years of progress in 5 years.

[BLUE RIBBON PANEL RECOMMENDATION E](#)

Minimize cancer treatment's

Source: <https://healthcaresdelivery.cancer.gov/telehealth/trace.html>



Telehealth.HHS.gov

Telehealth.HHS.gov is a trusted, timely, and one-stop resource for patients, providers, and researchers for everything they need to know about telehealth including:

- Best practice guides
- Licensure
- Policies
- Research
- Funding opportunities
- Events
- Tip sheets
- Videos



Telehealth.HHS.gov- Research Trends and Articles

Telehealth Trends

Discover the latest telehealth trends, data, and research studies.

Looking for recent publications and studies?

[Browse our research library](#)



Trend Spotlight



15% of Medicare fee-for-service users had a telehealth service in the third quarter of 2022.

There was no change in this percentage from quarter 2 to quarter 3 in 2022.

[Download the most recent report](#)

Data Spotlight



63-fold

increase in Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary telehealth visits in 2020

Source: Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2021



>20%

of adult patients had a telehealth visit in July 2022

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2022



98%

of HRSA-funded health centers used telehealth to provide primary care in 2021

Source: Health Resources and Services Administration, Uniform Data System, 2021

Research Articles and Papers

Browse our library of telehealth research studies.

Search by Keyword



Filters:

Topic

- Behavioral health i
- Emergency health i
- Health equity i
- HIV/AIDS i
- Maternal health i
- Medicare and Medicaid i
- Pediatric care i
- Remote patient monitoring i
- Rural health i
- School-based health i
- Telehealth experience i
- Telehealth policy i
- Workforce development i

Agency

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

+ Show more

[Reset all filters](#)

[Sociodemographic disparities in the use of cardiovascular ambulatory care and telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

This research study investigated the association of patient and visit characteristics with telehealth modality in cardiology clinics during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found disparities in video-based telehealth for older patients, Black patients, those with limited English proficiency, and Medicaid recipients. Further research is needed to understand barriers and outcomes related to telehealth among diverse populations.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; National Institutes of Health

Eslî Osmanliu, Neil M Kalwani, Vijaya Parameswaran, Lubna Qureshi, Rajesh Dash, David Scheinker, Fatima Rodriguez

September 2023

[Health equity](#) [Medicare and Medicaid](#)

[Older Veterans' Experiences of a Multicomponent Telehealth Program: Qualitative Program Evaluation Study](#)

This study focuses on addressing the multifaceted needs of older veterans with multiple health conditions through a telehealth program. Qualitative interviews with program participants identified areas for improvement and adaptation.

United States Department of Veterans Affairs

Michelle R Rauzi, Meredith L Mealer, Lauren M Abbate, Jennifer E Stevens-Lapsley, Kathryn A Nearing

September 2023

[Telehealth experience](#)

[Telemedicine Visits in US Skilled Nursing Facilities](#)

This cohort study investigated the telehealth use in skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study revealed that telehealth adoption in SNFs significantly increased in early 2020 and gradually stabilized at a higher rate than before the pandemic. Importantly, higher telemedicine use in SNFs was linked to improved access to psychiatry visits.

National Telehealth Conference

Conference topics includes:

- The adoption of telehealth and expansion of broadband connectivity to improve health equity
- Using tele-behavioral health as a successful model for integrating telehealth into the standard of care
- Telehealth's role in supporting the health care workforce and expanding services for patients
- Implications of health policy to inform telehealth's future in an evolving health care environment
- Telehealth Trends and Research



Source: <https://www.hrsa.gov/telehealth/national-telehealth-conference>



OAT Grant Funding Opportunities

- Licensure Portability Grant Program
- Evidence Based Telehealth Network Grant Program

FY 2024



- Telehealth Resource Centers
- Telehealth Research Centers

FY 2025



- Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program
- Telehealth Centers of excellence
- Telehealth Technology Enabled Learning Program

FY 2026



HHS Telehealth Resources

Telehealth.HHS.gov

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/>

Office for the Advancement of Telehealth

<https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/topics/telehealth>

Telehealth Centers of Excellence

<https://telehealthcoe.org/>

Telehealth Resource Centers

<https://www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/>

ProviderBridge

<https://www.providerbridge.org/>

Multi-Discipline Licensure Resource Project

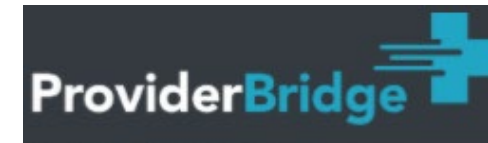
<https://licensureproject.org/>



TELEHEALTH.HHS.GOV



Telehealth Centers of Excellence



OAT Announcements

Telehealth-Focused

- ✓ Updates
- ✓ Funding opportunities
- ✓ Research findings
- ✓ Upcoming events
- ✓ And more

Office for the Advancement of Telehealth  **Announcements**

February 7, 2023 *Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)*

 **Telehealth Policies after the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency**

[Telehealth.HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov/telehealth) offers resources, including information about recent policy changes that extended telehealth flexibilities [after the COVID-19 PHE](#). Provider [fact sheets](#) about COVID-19 PHE waivers and flexibilities and [Medicaid telehealth webpages](#) are also available.

Office for the Advancement of Telehealth  **Announcements**

July 20, 2022 *Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)*

Affordable Connectivity Program 

10 WAYS TO SPREAD THE WORD

01 Help Your Community Enroll 	06 Share ACP Info on Your Websites and Social Media 
02 Spread the Word 	07 Request a Speaker for an Event 

Sign up at: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USHSHRSA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USHSHRSA_1601



Connect with HRSA

Learn more about our agency at:

www.HRSA.gov



[Sign up for the HRSA eNews](#)

FOLLOW US:



Contact Information

Wakina Scott
wscott@hrsa.gov

