



NATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF  
**TELEHEALTH**  
RESOURCE CENTERS

# National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers

*Annual Report 2020*

# Table of Contents

04

## About the NCTRC

Overview

2020 Highlights & Impact of  
NCTRC Initiatives

10

## Member Spotlights

TTAC | CCHP | CTCR | gpTRAC

HTRC | MATRC | NETRC | NRTRC

PBTRC | SCTRC | SCTR | SWTRC

TexLa TRC | UMTRC

26

## 2020 In Conclusion

NCTRC Contact Information



# About the NCTRC

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers (NCTRC) is a collaborative of 12 regional and 2 national Telehealth Resource Centers (TRCs) committed to assisting organizations in the implementation of telehealth programs for rural and underserved communities.



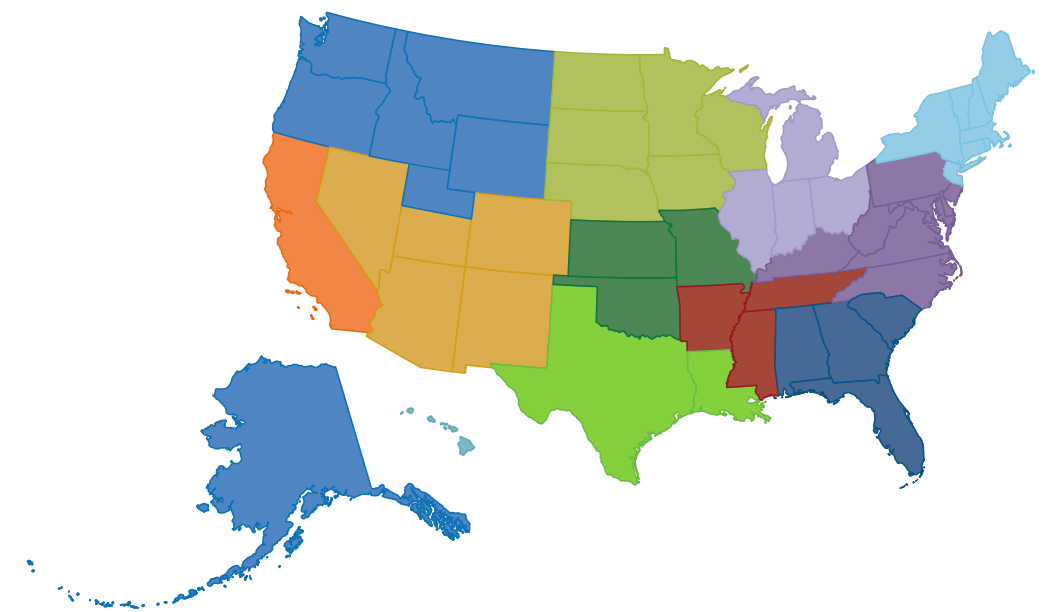
## Overview

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers (NCTRC) is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Office for the Advancement of Telehealth (OAT). TRCs provide valuable training, education, research, and consultative services to all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as the U.S. territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the freely associated states of the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Since 2017, the NCTRC has been dedicated to collaboratively expanding the reach of healthcare, supporting the building of sustainable telehealth programs and improving health outcomes.

All 14 TRCs are committed to helping healthcare organizations, practices and other stakeholders implement telehealth programs that best fit their needs and overcome barriers, advance telehealth education, and provide resources.

### **Working together to achieve national goals, the NCTRC brings together experts in policy, technology, operations, technical assistance and more:**

- 12 regional TRCs are regional experts in telehealth implementation and provide a wide range of services targeted to local community needs including: technical assistance, education, guidance, and resources on various topics.
- Two national TRCs include the Center for Connected Health Policy and the Telehealth Technology Assistance and Resource Center.



# National Impact

## Rising to the Challenge

The NCTRC works collaboratively to advance telehealth across the nation by connecting telehealth stakeholders at local, state, and federal levels to raise awareness and collaboration, as well as, by providing technical assistance and educational services to enhance telehealth programs and services.

### Expert Technical Assistance:

- Design and execution of needs assessments
- Identification of funding sources
- Strategic and business planning
- Selection and use of various telehealth technologies
- Policy analysis and guidance
- Program evaluation

### Training:

- Educational programs through webinars, regional conferences and technology showcases
- Training on policies, technologies, implementation of best practices and sustainability

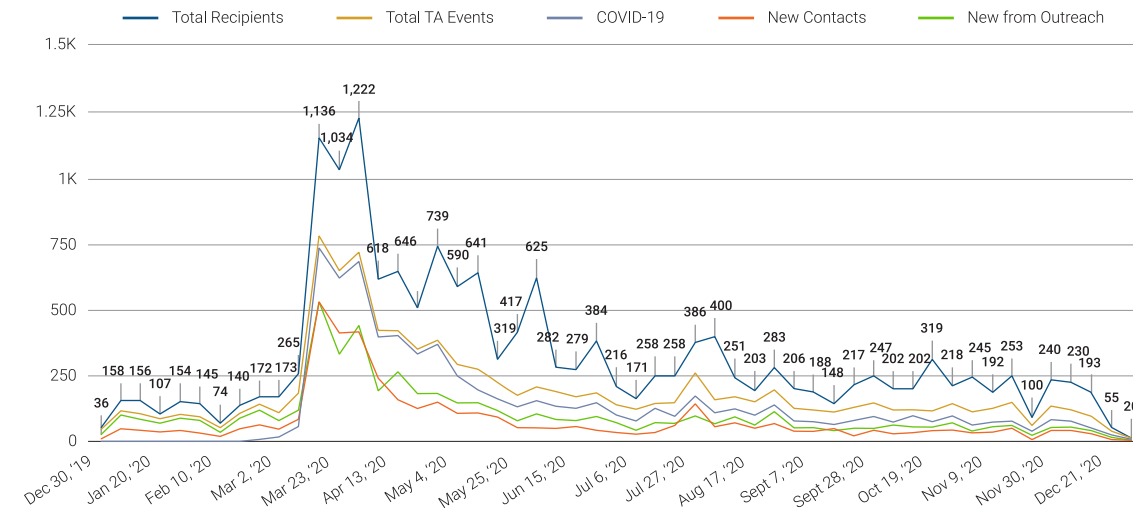
### Resources:

- Development of tool kits, materials, and resources
- Specialized tools and templates for telehealth programs and providers

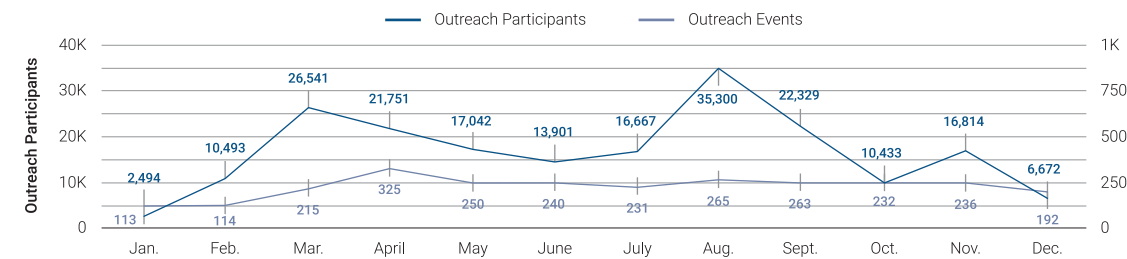


In 2020 the NCTRC delivered value to various stakeholders including hospitals, providers, healthcare associations, clinics, vendors, academic institutions, HRSA grantees, government, insurers and many new groups during a year of unprecedented challenges.

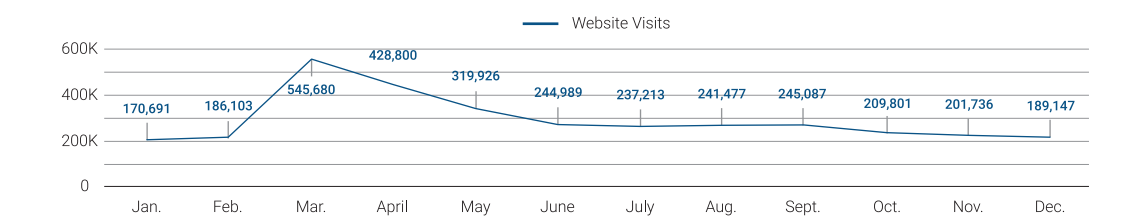
TA RECIPIENTS, EVENTS, AND NEW CONTACTS PER WEEK\*



Fielded over **10,000 Technical Assistance** requests throughout the year to provide an average of nearly 850 consultations per month. **353% increase over 2019**



Delivered **2,716 Outreach Events** to a total of 200,487 participants through educational webinars, regional meetings, and technology showcases. **207% increase over 2019**



Received over **3,200,000 Website Visits** providing access to wide-ranging resources, tool kits, and key information. **93% increase over 2019**

\*Data is combined from all 14 TRCs.



## NCTRC Member Spotlights

Two National TRCs have specific roles providing valuable technology and policy expertise and services to the industry from a national perspective. 12 Regional TRCs provide valuable expertise and resources at the state and local level.



# TTAC

## Telehealth Technology Assessment Resource Center



TTAC offers expertise and guidelines on technology used in telehealth programs, from medical peripheral devices, mHealth devices and apps to video conferencing and telemedicine platforms. Information is provided through webinars, toolkits, and video presentations on telemedicine technology, all of which are provided through the TTAC website. The toolkits and interactive platforms allow visitors to learn how the technology works and how it can be used in patient care.

TTAC features newer technologies in Innovation Watches and trending technologies in Technology Showcases. TTAC also conducts Technology Showcases at Regional TRC Conferences, allowing attendees the opportunity to review and assess medical devices and peripherals side by side in a vendor neutral

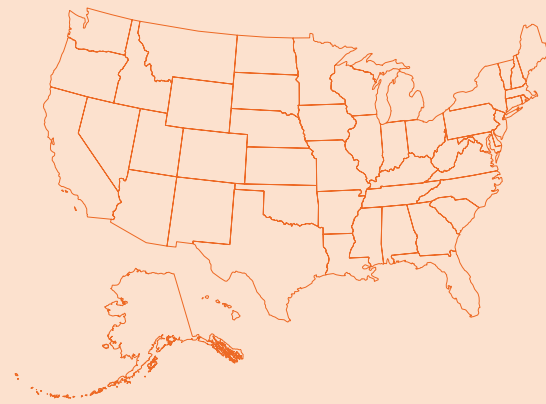
environment. When the Covid-19 Pandemic created a year of virtual conferences, TTAC adapted the Technology Showcase to a virtual environment of technology discussion and a combination of pre-recorded videos using the equipment, to a hands-on, live discussion of the technology.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, TTAC saw a surge in requests for technical assistance and information regarding how providers can conduct clinical encounters with their patients' in the home environment. Additionally, there was a significant increase in interest in direct-to-consumer telehealth technology, platforms, and connectivity into the patient's home. Significant work was accomplished throughout 2020 in reimbursement for telehealth services, as well as identification of various platforms that can be used for telehealth delivery into the home (e.g. Zoom, Vidyo, Skype, Google Hangout) and identification of areas where lack of broadband access impedes telehealth delivery, most specifically in rural communities.

TTAC has experienced significant growth in Technical Assistance requests since the beginning of the pandemic (March through November) with over 1885% increase in Technical Assistance requests and over 4880% increase in Outreach activities including presentations at

webinars primarily directed towards providing services to patients in the home environment, remote patient monitoring, direct-to-consumer care, cybersecurity, telehealth platforms and broadband challenges. TTAC also created a Pandemic Response Project Team to develop an Action Plan for a model to support rural communities in a return of COVID-19 or any future pandemic, applying telemedicine capabilities and technologies.

In 2020, an initial white paper was created to address the demands of the quarantine that include, but are not limited to: screening, testing, tracking and monitoring, public health, communications, education, behavioral health, outgoing care, emergent care, workers (healthcare and essential other). An outcome of this work also included a Policy overview of telehealth reimbursement processes and the relaxation of rules during the Pandemic. Although it is well understood that the relaxation of rules is a temporary measure, it is still important to understand how the Pandemic has shifted the focus on Telehealth and made significant changes in how telehealth services are delivered. TTAC is also partnering with the California Telehealth Resource Center (CTRC) to identify Best Practices implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. ■



### NATIONAL CENTER

Doris T. Barta, MHA, Director  
telehealthtechnology.org

**“You two completely mastered the ‘COVID Tango’ where you quickly and artfully danced around the transformation from an in-person to an on-line showcase.”**

# CCHP

## Center for Connected Health Policy



CCHP provides extensive policy analyses, updates, resources, education, legislative tracking and oversees administrative operations for the Consortium. In 2020, CCHP focused on meeting the unique Technical Assistance demands for policy assistance brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to creating CCHP's bi-annual [50 state report](#) on telehealth laws, regulations and Medicaid policies, produced since 2012, CCHP also tracked federal developments and built a [state-by-state database](#) specifically for tracking temporary policy changes implemented as a result of the pandemic. CCHP developed numerous resources including factsheets, YouTube videos, and email alerts on specific policy changes in the Medicare program. These efforts included factsheets and charts that covered federal COVID-19 actions and their expiration dates, an easy to reference chart of CMS guidance

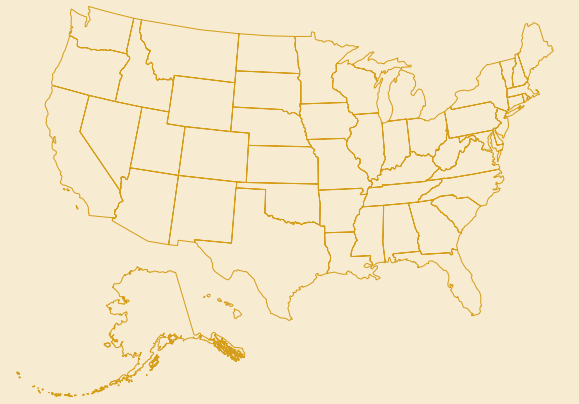
for FQHCs and RHCs, and a crosswalk between CMS' Interim Final Rules on the COVID-19 telehealth flexibilities and their published guidance document. CCHP also migrated to a new [legislative tracking tool](#) in 2020 that provided a more user-friendly experience and updates on a minute-by-minute basis with the latest information on telehealth legislation and regulation as it moves through the policy process.

CCHP experienced a large increase in Technical Assistance requests in 2020 compared to previous years as a result of the rapid adoption of telehealth by new providers during the pandemic. New audiences such as private practices, large hospital systems and consumer groups engaged CCHP for assistance in working through the requirements of telehealth policy and the complexities of billing for telehealth services. Additionally, hospice providers and home health agencies were another group that contacted CCHP for guidance during this pandemic. CCHP worked with hospice providers such as Legacy Hospice in Mississippi and Regency Home Healthcare in Minnesota to help them understand Medicare's reimbursement policies. New patient advocacy organizations and disease groups also sought CCHP assistance, including the American Foundation for the Blind and the Obesity Society. As has occurred in years past, CCHP was used as a resource by state Medicaid offices and other government agencies, such as Florida Agency for Health Care Administration,

North Carolina Office of Rural Health and the Centers for Disease Control. Additionally, media attention on the CCHP skyrocketed with over 50 published articles

**“I cannot tell you how helpful you have been especially through the pandemic. I am a physician executive who oversees care delivered by 700 clinicians across 10 states. The information you have provided me and the time you save me looking for information have saved lives.”**

between January and July, including many by mainstream news organizations, such as U.S. News and World Report, The Washington Post and over 60 media interviews. CCHP saw increased demand for website resources of 2.4 times over 2019, going from an average of 15,000 hits/month to an average of 51,000 in 2020, hitting peak volumes of 100,000 visitors in March and April. CCHP's weekly email alerts and newsletter subscribers more than doubled from 7,000 in early 2020 to over 15,000 by end of the year. Overall, 2020 was a year of tremendous growth in demand for Technical Assistance requests and resources from the CCHP who rose to meet the challenge. ■



### NATIONAL CENTER

Mei Wa Kwong, JD, Executive Director  
cchpca.org

# CTRC

## California Telehealth Resource Center



CTRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across the state of California. In 2020, CTRC efforts were focused on providing rapid response Technical Assistance and training to providers and stakeholders wishing to utilize telehealth technologies as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a long-standing resource center in the state, CTRC has developed the reputation of being quick to respond, knowledgeable about a wide variety of telehealth topics and a trusted, unbiased resource.

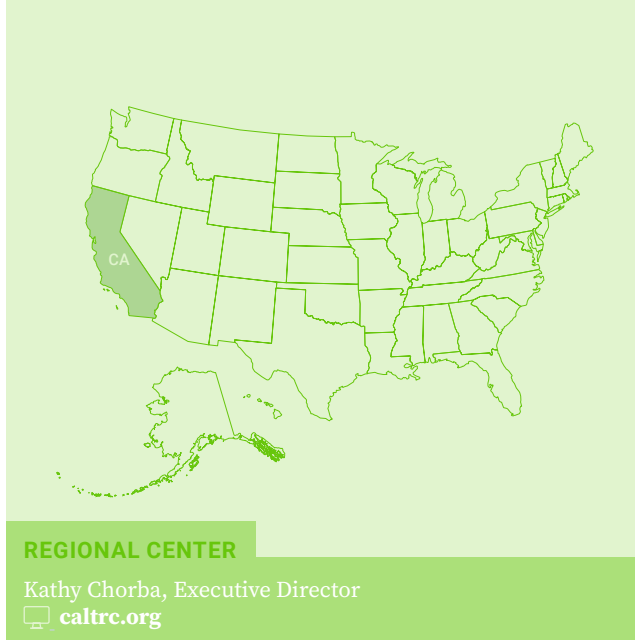
When the pandemic hit, providers, billers/coders and other program staff turned to CTRC for help with the latest information on policy, reimbursement, and program transition assistance. While CTRC's primary customer base consists of primary and specialty care providers, healthcare organizations and health plans, during the pandemic the CTRC saw significant expansion to include skilled nursing facilities, colleges and universities, patients and families, community groups, pharmacies, and patient advocacy groups.

During the months of March and April, CTRC staff responded to a 670% increase in Technical Assistance requests. Overall, since the beginning of the year, CTRC provided Technical Assistance services to over 2,000 individuals and reached over 9,000 individuals through trainings, webinars, and other group presentations.

In response to the overwhelming need for information regarding new regulations, modified workflow and rapid start telehealth implementation for direct to patient care during COVID-19, CTRC quickly developed COVID-19-specific pages for our caltrc.org website, focusing on reimbursement, policy, patient and provider information. These pages continue to grow as new information is either created or curated by the CTRC.

**“You and your team are simply amazing, and I don’t know what we would do without you.... Whether it’s clinical connections, billing questions, interpretation of regulations, or even technical questions, the CTRC team is the best!”**

CTRC had previously developed a series of online Telehealth Coordinator courses which have been incorporated into required curriculum for several nursing schools nationwide. Between March and June 2020, CTRC saw an exponential increase in registrations and completion of these courses. In 2020, CTRC developed two



### REGIONAL CENTER

Kathy Chorba, Executive Director  
caltrc.org

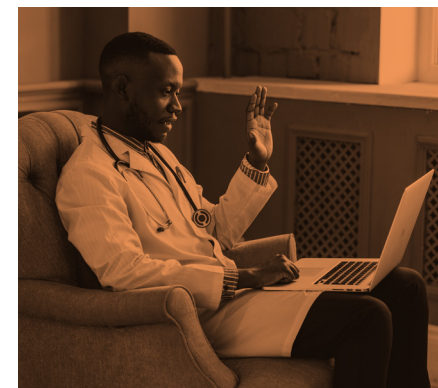
additional courses: Questions to Ask a Specialty Provider Prior to Signing a Contract and FQHC-RHC Reimbursement During COVID-19.

In addition to online courses, CTRC quickly developed and posted educational videos for telehealth start-up, and billing and reimbursement during COVID-19. Nationwide and statewide organizations invited CTRC to speak in numerous webinars on topics such as rapid start-up and reimbursement. The CTRC presented on the Health and Human Services' Telehealth Hack nationwide webinar series on Telehealth Workflow in August 2020 and 20 Questions to Ask a Specialty Service Provider in December 2020. CTRC also participated in the NACHC Telehealth Roundtable series of national meetings that convenes telehealth technical assistance providers for the purpose of discovering and sharing relevant resources. CTRC is also partnering with other TRCs to create and contribute educational videos for MATRC's FQHC video library.

In an effort to discover and disseminate promising practices for telehealth transition from the clinic-to-clinic model to a provider-to-patient model, the CTRC initiated a Subject Matter Expert (SME) interview project and has recruited seven additional TRCs to collaborate in the collection of recorded and transcribed interviews with SMEs from over 100 clinics nationwide. The information gathered from this interview project will be used to create materials, courses and presentations that can be shared nationwide as part of an emergency response toolkit. ■

# gpTRAC

## Great Plains Telehealth Resource and Assistance Center

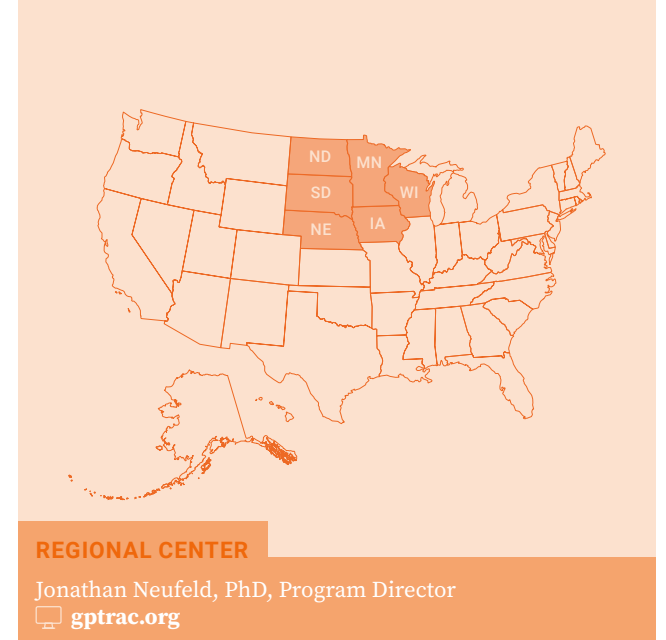


gpTRAC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a six-state region. In 2020, gpTRAC hosted or participated in 128 outreach events reaching more than 9,000 participants through presentations at 20 conferences, webinars and other collaborative trainings for over a dozen groups including: Iowa PCA, Wisconsin PCA, Health Care Association of Nebraska, Community Health Association of the Dakotas, Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Plans, STRATIS Health, Northeast Wisconsin AHEC, Midwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center, several South Dakota behavioral health providers (VOA, Southern Plains Behavioral Health, and Behavioral Management Services), and Health Information Management Associations in Wisconsin and North Dakota.

New partnerships were established with STRATIS Health, several Area Health Education Centers, a social work graduate training program in Berkeley, and RN

**“Dozens of our therapists were getting set up on Zoom, learning about telehealth visits, and studying the ethical ramifications. It lined up perfectly; by the beginning of COVID, we were feeling confident that we could use telehealth in our practice.”**

training programs in multiple states. Early in the pandemic several national organizations, including NACHC, RCORP, and Integrated Work reached out to gpTRAC for presentations on national trends in telehealth use, reimbursement, and policy. gpTRAC has also partnered with NACHC to plan and produce the Telehealth Roundtable series of national meetings convening telehealth technical assistance providers to share best practices and coordinate telehealth TA resource development efforts.



### REGIONAL CENTER

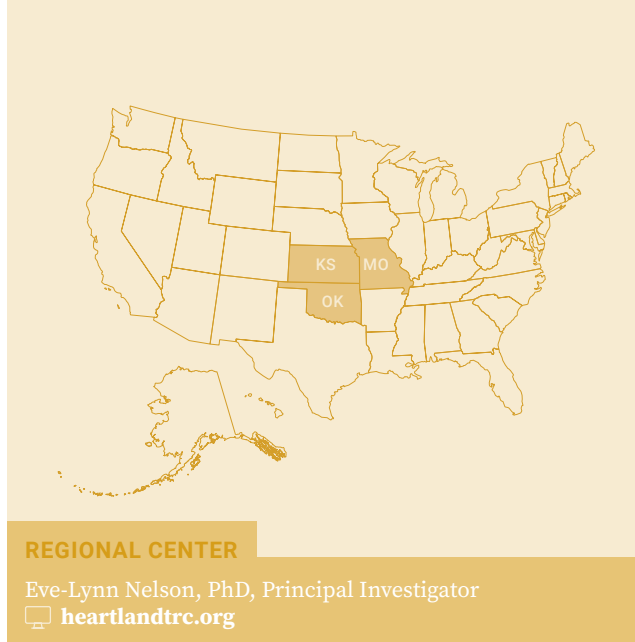
Jonathan Neufeld, PhD, Program Director  
gptrac.org

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, gpTRAC created a new website (www.telehealthquickstart.org) to provide information on COVID-19 policies and best practices for rapidly starting up a telehealth service, ramped up capacity to provide Technical Assistance and Outreach presentations, including participating in taking on the Telehealth Hack series. gpTRAC provided planning and presentation for the “Bonus Hack” focused on integrated telebehavioral health, which attracted over 380 attendees. gpTRAC and the NCTRC Data Committee played key roles in expanding data collection and reporting capabilities using the TRC-ALPHA data collection system. New reports were developed to show weekly trends in TA and Outreach volume and accurate reporting for HRSA funders. gpTRAC also began an effort to more consistently collect and publish stories of organizations rapidly deploying telehealth services during the pandemic. ■



# HTRC

## Heartland Telehealth Resource Center



HTRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a three-state region. In 2020, the HTRC obtained 303 new contacts and assisted 953 returning contacts for a total of 1256 contacts served, an increase of 385% over 2019. As a result of a 300% increase in Technical Assistance calls and emails, HTRC began a new Telemedicine

Project ECHO for healthcare providers in Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

By Providing an ECHO, the HTRC reduced individual Technical Assistance calls on the same topics, allowing the TRC to direct time and energy to creating brief didactics and robust discussions concerning technology, how to get started, clinical workflows, quick implementation, billing and regulations. Many of the provider questions reflect the following: how to get started with telehealth; what platforms are easy to use; will reimbursement be the same after COVID; billing and coding advice; and best practices. The telemedicine ECHO for the Heartland program began in April with two ECHOs each week, one for Primary Health and the other for Behavioral Health. As the program evolved, the number of ECHOs reduced to one time per week and then two

times a month. The program averaged 35 participants per ECHO and received very high satisfaction marks.

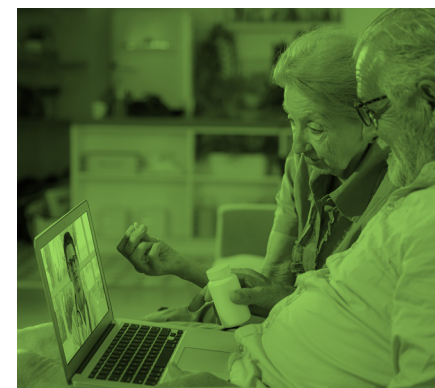
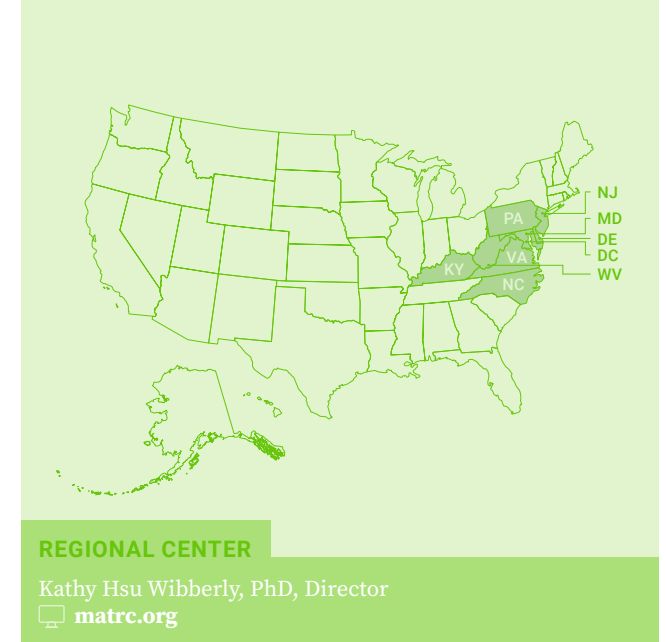
HTRC also implemented a 2020 Webinar Series that included updates on various topics such as federal and state telehealth policies during COVID-19 and access for veterans in rural areas. HTRC created valuable website resources including a dedicated COVID-19 webpage so that clients could access information quickly.

In 2020, the HTRC engaged in various community partnerships during the COVID-19 pandemic. One collaborative initiative with Phillips County Health System in rural Kansas saved a geriatric mental health support program by quickly implementing an iPad solution for patients, allowing patients to continue to meet with a licensed therapist and psychiatrist via telehealth. Within 24 hours, the program switched from in-person care to 100% telehealth and the new program took off. ■

**“Because of the highly-infectious nature of COVID, many of us transitioned from transitional visits to televisits. So I feel blessed because I was a little bit ahead of the curve, and it was pretty seamless. But it’s so important again, if you’re gonna have to do that so quickly, to have resources like HTRC’s Telemedicine ECHO again to learn from experts and to get practical tips.”**

# MATRC

## Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center



MATRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a nine-state region through technical assistance, training and facilitating the development of strategic partnerships. In 2020, MATRC spent a concerted amount of time and effort providing stakeholders with Technical Assistance and training in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. During the months of March and April, MATRC staff saw an 800% increase in Technical Assistance requests. Overall in 2020, MATRC provided Technical Assistance services to over 1,400 individuals and reached over 12,000 individuals through trainings, webinars and other presentations. In order to try to keep up with the significant demand for services, MATRC very quickly put together a comprehensive Telehealth Resources for COVID-19 Toolkit of both curated and original content at <https://www.matrc.org/matrc-telehealth-resources-for-covid-19/>. This toolkit continues to be updated on a regular basis and will be undergoing a facelift in the upcoming months as the volume of information is rapidly

outgrowing its present display format. The toolkit includes best practices for clinicians of all types, including physicians, behavioral health providers, allied health professionals and more.

**“I appreciate all of the resources you have provided as this will help us begin to develop a framework that we can use as part of our IPE project. While we have some individuals with more in-depth knowledge of these concepts, many of us are just beginning to understand and use telehealth ourselves. Applying these concepts to a context to which we are not largely familiar has been challenging but it’s important to ensure we develop these modules with the most up-to-date and accurate information as possible. Again, you are a wonderful resource and I thank you!”**

In addition to this comprehensive online toolkit, MATRC’s major initiatives and activities in 2020 included: 1) co-hosting a four-day Virtual Conference Series called “Launching into Telehealth” with over 1,000

registrants in partnership with the Northeast TRC; 2) offering Virtual Office Hours multiple days per month; 3) developing telehealth best practices toolkits for vulnerable populations in response to COVID-19 to include geriatric populations, post-acute and long term care facilities, correctional facilities and homeless populations; 4) curating COVID-19 response best practices across the MATRC region; 5) hosting a webinar for the NCTRC webinar series on Inpatient eConsults in response to COVID-19; 6) hosting/moderating a session for the HHS Telehealth Hack Series; 7) collaborating with the Northeast TRC and South Central TRC to revitalize a Telehealth Locator tool to assist providers, policy makers and patients/clients; 8) participating with TTAC on the National Pandemic Response Best Practices Effort; 9) collaborating with multiple TRCs to develop an FQHC and RHC Telehealth Toolkit and Video Library; 10) collaborating with multiple TRCs to conduct key informant interviews with FQHCs to glean telehealth best practices and lessons learned; 11) writing a textbook chapter on Telehealth and COVID-19; 12) collaborating with the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) and other TRCs to develop a taxonomy for FQHC telehealth data collection; 13) developing training modules (some free as part of our COVID-19 toolkit, and others as part of Telehealth Village: <https://telehealthvillage.com/Catalog.aspx>.) ■

# NETRC

## Northeast Telehealth Resource Center

NETRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across an eight-state region. Throughout 2020, NETRC was committed to providing stakeholders across the northeast with Technical Assistance (TA), training, and resources in response to COVID-19, with a 920% increase in TA requests during the early months of the pandemic.

To meet the expanding needs of the region during COVID-19, NETRC developed many new resources, including a COVID-19 and Telehealth webpage ([www.NETRC.org/COVID-19](http://www.NETRC.org/COVID-19)), Telehealth Town Halls and Project ECHOs. These tools and events allowed quick dissemination of telehealth updates and enabled region-wide collaborative support and problem solving. NETRC also created an assortment of educational resources, including [fact sheets](#), [weblogographies](#), and toolkits.

Policy flexibilities allowed during the Public Health Emergency (PHE) enabled many new groups to leverage the benefits of telehealth. NETRC provided TA to diverse organizations across the health care spectrum, including health systems, hospitals, primary care, behavioral health providers, colleges/universities, policy makers, judicial systems, family planning, and others. Notably, many new FQHCs and RHCs contacted NETRC to assist in launching their first-ever telehealth programs, permitted in part by policy expansions under the PHE.

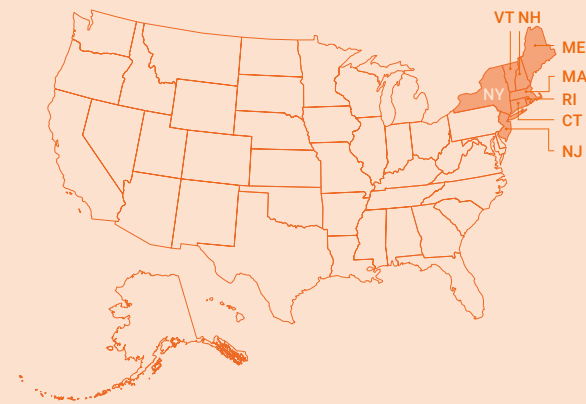
NETRC provided expertise in the development of workforce training resources across all health science

disciplines, including creating a New York State Telehealth Training Portal in collaboration with New York State Department of Health ([www.NYTelehealth.NETRC.org](http://www.NYTelehealth.NETRC.org)). NETRC also saw a significant increase in requests from colleges and universities to implement telehealth training to meet immediate needs for virtual courses and clinical placements for students as a result of COVID-19, and planning for permanent integration of telehealth into curriculum moving forward.

**“I reached out to the NETRC for help during the pandemic as we were faced with the task of orienting almost 1,000 graduate students to the concept and practice of telehealth seemingly overnight. The staff at NETRC responded quickly, pleasantly, and collaboratively, ultimately producing a resource personalized for Simmons in the best (and ethical) practices in using telehealth platforms for the delivery of social work services. We are infinitely grateful for the kind spirit and responsiveness during such a stressful time.”**

NETRC's 2020 impact includes:

- Over 1,800 recipients of technical



### REGIONAL CENTER

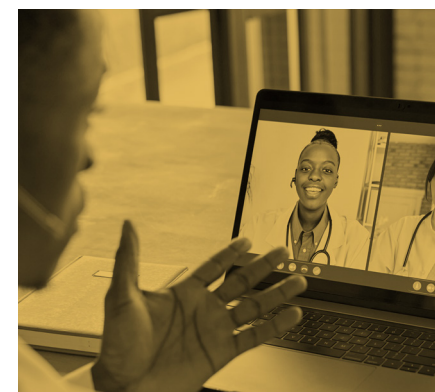
Danielle Louder, Program Director; Terry Rabinowitz, MD, DDS, Principal Investigator | [netrc.org](http://netrc.org)

assistance to support telehealth program development and optimization

- Provided >250 training and educational opportunities for over 19,000 attendees, including key topics such as [“Leveraging Telehealth to Address Social Determinants of Health”](#)
- Co-hosted a four-day Virtual Conference Series - “Launching into Telehealth” with over 1,000 registrants, in collaboration with MATRC
- Hosted weekly state-specific Telehealth Office Hours & monthly Telehealth Leadership Forums, including a regional Primary Care Association collaboration
- Developed toolkits to support telehealth implementation and best practices, such as the [Roadmap and Toolkit for Primary Care and Behavioral Telehealth Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).
- Developed patient/consumer facing resources to help providers with patient outreach and engagement, such as [Telehealth Perspectives](#), a short video that shows telehealth's vital role in our healthcare system
- Initiated development of Telehealth Locator mapping tool in partnership with MATRC and SCTRC
- Contributed to multiple peer-review articles and other publications, including contributions to O'Hara V. et al. [The pediatric weight management office visit via telemedicine: pre- to post-COVID-19 pandemic](#), and a chapter on Technology and Older Adults for the Handbook of Rural Aging, to be published March, 2021 ■

# NRTRC

## Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center



NRTRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a seven-state region. The NRTRC welcomed a new Principal Investigator (PI), Program Director (PD), and Programs Manager. Staff developed and implemented new workflows and systems for tracking and responding to requests for Technical Assistance (TA) via phone, email, and online forms.

The NRTRC held its first three-day virtual conference in April of 2020 that included four workshops and 20 breakout presentations. Over 1,000 registrants from 42 states participated in the conference. In 2020, the NRTRC implemented an online Learning Management System (LMS) to house all of the educational offerings and finalized the development of an online Telehealth 101 program with 6 modules. The NRTRC signed

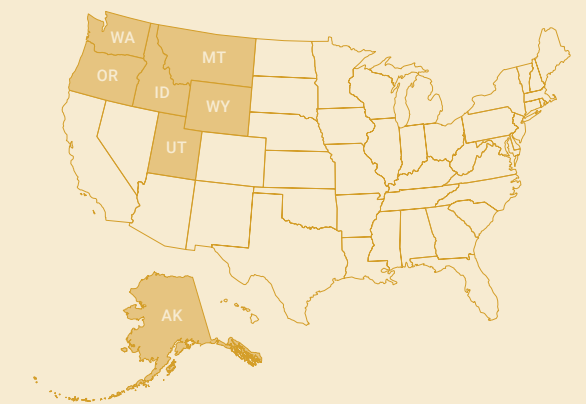
an MOU with the Washington State Telehealth Collaborative to house a telehealth training course in the new LMS for licensed providers in the State of Washington to complete and receive a certificate of completion for telehealth. The NRTRC is creating a new website with specific details about telehealth that are unique to each state in the region and links to new LMS resources.

In 2020, the NRTRC implemented bi-monthly office hours in response to higher volumes of requests for technical assistance (over 435 between January and October 2020) from healthcare providers in the region dealing with the challenges of COVID-19 and telehealth program implementation. The NRTRC also engaged with many new groups who reached out for support this year including: The Washington State Telehealth Collaborative, The University of Washington Behavioral Health Institute (BHI), Gonzaga University College of Nursing in Spokane, WA, University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA, Southeast Idaho AHEC Community Partnership Project through Idaho State University, Washington State University College of Nursing, Oregon AHEC Program, Washington State Physical Therapy Managers Association, Area Health Education Center (AHEC) of Western Washington, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Oregon Washington Health Network.

In addition, the NRTRC signed sub-awards with each state in the region to assist with COVID-19 challenges and identification of telehealth specific policies and regulations

**“On behalf of the University of Washington/Harborview Medical Center Behavioral Health Institute (BHI), we gratefully acknowledge the Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center for its amazing support and collaboration with the BHI during this unprecedented public health crisis created by COVID-19.”**

in each state. The NRTRC signed a sub-award agreement with Comagine Health, the CMS designated QIO/QIN for the region, to deliver three webinars and create resources on best-practice for telehealth providers and patients. ■



### REGIONAL CENTER

Matt McCullough, Principal Investigator; Nicki Perisho, Program Director; Jaleen Johnson, Program Manager | [nrtrc.org](http://nrtrc.org)

# PBTRC

## Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center



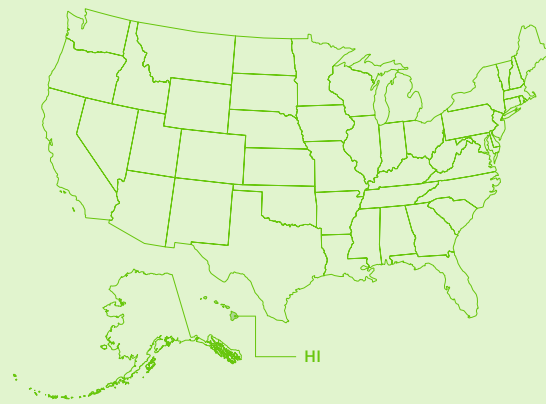
**PBTRC** promotes the advancement of telehealth across Hawaii and the Pacific Basin. In 2020, the PBTRC established a Telehealth 'Hui' (e.g., 'group' in Hawaiian) for Telemedicine Directors, Payors, and other telehealth stakeholders in the region. The PBTRC held weekly telehealth roundtable discussions with the Hawaii Primary Care Association to facilitate peer-to-peer information sharing for FQHCs. Over the year, significant support and outreach was provided to special populations including: a joint webinar with Papa Ola Lokahi an organization that coordinates the Native Hawaiian Health Systems, production and filming of a telehealth episode for the 'Kupuna' ('elder' in Hawaiian) Network television program; participation on a telehealth panel for an AARP tele-town hall with 1633 attendees; collaboration with a homeless service agency to establish telehealth street clinics and telehealth in homeless

shelters; participation in broadband and digital equity initiatives, including the Hawaii Broadband Hui; assistance in the development of a Hawaii Digital Equity Declaration; and participation in the American Samoa Territorial Broadband Strategy Hui and Telehealth Taskforce.

**“PBTRC really helped to open our eyes to the possibilities of telehealth. I established several telehealth programs at the Pohnpei Hospital including gastroenterology and pathology. These telehealth programs provide significant support to patients and health care providers that live in remote and rural Pacific Islands.”**

In 2020, the PBTRC engaged with many new groups such as the Hawaii Primary Care Association, Pacific Island Primary Care Association, Homeless Service Agencies, Family Advocacy Groups, Independent Physician Groups, State of Hawaii Medicaid, Medicaid Managed Care Organizations, and AARP.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PBTRC responded to significantly higher volumes of requests for Technical Assistance (465%



### REGIONAL CENTER

Deborah Birkmire-Peters, PhD, Program Co-Director;  
Christina Higa, Program Co-Director | [pbtrc.org](http://pbtrc.org)

increase over 2019 between March to October) and Outreach, increasing from hosting 17 webinars with 1400 participants to 48 webinars with over 3000 participants in the same period. Additionally, the PBTRC established weekly virtual office hours to assist health care providers quickly transition to telehealth services because of COVID-19 public health emergency measures, such as, stay at home orders and social distancing mandates and conducting a full spectrum of telehealth training to include topics on policy, billing and reimbursement, how to get started, provider and patient resources, clinical workflows, and evaluation.

The PBTRC assisted the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) State Emergency Support Function #8 Public Health and Medical Services develop a Hawaii statewide telemedicine needs assessment survey; participated in the State of Hawaii Lt. Governor's COVID-19 taskforce meetings; and assisted the Hawaii Department of Health in coordinating the Governor and Lt. Governor's press conference on telehealth with health care leaders in Hawaii that launched the telehealth campaign "call before you click." ■

# SCTRC

## South Central Telehealth Resource Center

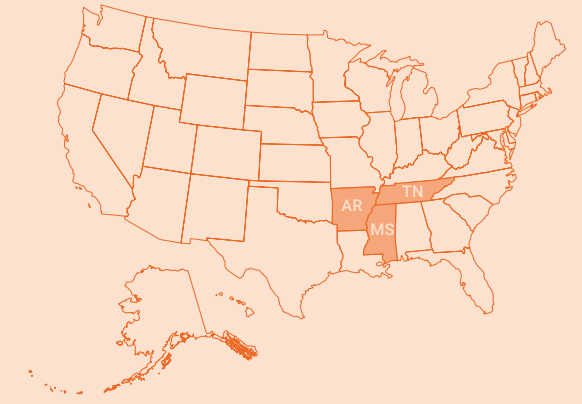


**SCTRC** promotes the advancement of telehealth across a three-state region. With the impact of the pandemic, the SCTRC provided expanded just-in-time Technical Assistance to healthcare providers and organizations. Fielding well over 500 requests between March and October, the SCTRC saw a dramatic increase of over 260% compared to the same period in 2019. In addition to ad-hoc questions, the SCTRC developed resources and educational materials to meet specific regional requests and then often shared those same materials via the LearnTelehealth.org website for reference to a wider audience.

The SCTRC furnished a variety of services in 2020 including: (1) educational webinars of state-specific and national interest on topics such as Telehealth 101, billing and reimbursement, policy, clinical best practices, technology updates, remote patient monitoring, program overviews, and telehealth grant writing; (2) virtual,

real-time Technical Assistance including development of multiple, provider-specific resources that were shared via the LearnTelehealth.org website including the Telehealth Assistance for Providers kit and regional resources such as the Virtual Visit Billing and Reimbursement Guides for each state; (3) new course modules including the Telehealth Technology Overview; (4) new archived webinar video recordings that were added to the website to provide education on telehealth, remote patient monitoring, and a variety of other state-specific topics; (5) podcasts in partnership with Dr. Amit Sachdev at HHS featuring Dr. Curtis Lowery on practical guidance on the use of telehealth by healthcare providers; (6) co-hosted and co-developed several virtual events in collaboration with many organizations such as the Community Health Centers of Arkansas, the Mississippi Telehealth Association, the University of Southern Alabama, and Vanderbilt University; and (7) partnering with groups including the Telehealth Centers of Excellence to host the SEARCH2020 National Telehealth Research Symposium which highlights and promotes telehealth research and best practices development.

**“Navigating through 2020 has been a challenge, but the SCTRC has risen to the challenge by being a leader in the areas of telehealth promotion/advocacy as well as telehealth education...Because I work in a rural and underserved area in Mississippi, I can't wait to use what I learn to help the masses locally, nationally, and internationally.”**



### REGIONAL CENTER

Hari Eswaran, PhD, Principal Investigator  
[learntelehealth.org](http://learntelehealth.org)

Additionally, the SCTRC is collaborating with the UAMS Northwest Campus, the University of Tennessee, and the University of Mississippi Medical Center - Center for Telehealth to develop remote Telehealth Training Centers and demonstration kits in each of our three service states. The SCTRC also engaged with many new groups including: Mississippi Telehealth Association (MS), Community Health Centers of Arkansas (AR), Heartland Regional Genetics Network (Multiple), Arkansas Department of Health - Rural Health Conference (AR), HRSA Ryan White National Conference (HHS), Rural Health Association of Arkansas (Established 2020) (AR), University of Memphis, Social Work Department (TN), National Center for State Courts (National), Arkansas Society for Public Health Education (AR), Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care (AR), Johnson City Community Health Center (TN), Maury Regional Medical Center (TN), Mississippi Department of Mental Health (MS), and North Sunflower Medical Center (MS). ■

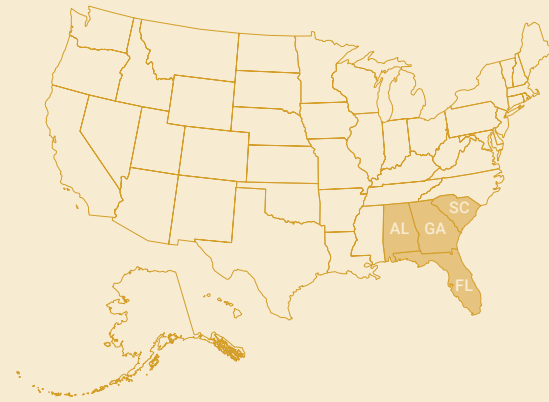
# SETRC

## Southeast Telehealth Resource Center



SETRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a four-state region by (1) providing Technical Assistance and promotion of best practices for the development of new and existing telehealth networks, and (2) delivering standardized telehealth workforce training in telehealth applications and technology.

**“I am writing to sincerely thank you for the tremendous support that SETRC and GPT have provided to The Scott Center for Autism Treatment’s telehealth program, as well as your pivotal role in fostering telehealth in underserved communities in the southeastern region and beyond.”**



### REGIONAL CENTER

Rena Brewer, MA, RN, Principal Investigator  
setrc.us

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, demand and usage of telemedicine rose dramatically in 2020. In response, SETRC served as a clearinghouse for first time implementors needing quick-start assistance and existing telehealth providers who requested help with digesting the rapidly changing waivers, how to implement in-home telehealth and what steps to take for a rapid expansion of existing telehealth services. SETRC staff delivered assistance and outreach to over 28,000 recipients in 2020. Telehealth Technical Assistance was delivered through a variety of modalities to include individual and group virtual meetings and teleconferences, webinars, phone conversations and individual or group email communications.

In 2020, SETRC implemented the University Training Partnerships project to prepare a “Telehealth Ready” workforce capable

of addressing the increased demand for the delivery of virtual healthcare created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program enables graduating nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other health care students, to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to utilize telehealth technologies in practice.

Additionally, the SETRC has been working with the Governor’s office of the US Virgin Islands on their HIE efforts, which includes a telehealth component. Through the Governor’s HIE initiative a new set of telehealth rules were drafted and introduced. The SETRC is also working on a strategic planning initiative around building out a territory wide telehealth network. The SETRC also saw an increase in telehealth education requests from Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), resulting in the SETRC providing several Telehealth 101 sessions for AHEC students. ■

# SWTRC

## Southwest Telehealth Resource Center



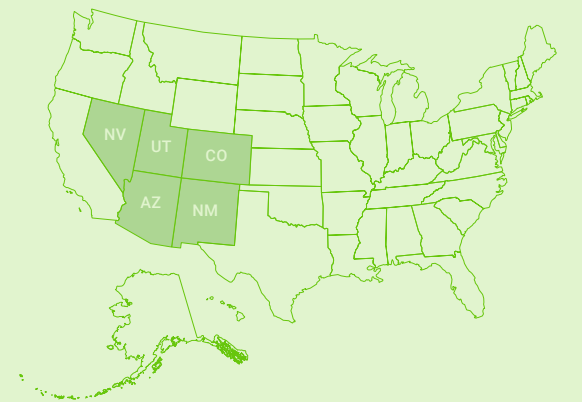
The SWTRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a five-state region. In 2020, the SWTRC dedicated time to creating materials designed to provide education about telemedicine to consumers. Major projects involved creating six info-graphic flyers in Spanish and Navajo to target challenges in access to healthcare that were exacerbated by the COVID public health emergency in these major populations in the Southwest. The SWTRC also produced an infomercial in English and Spanish to promote telemedicine awareness and the mission of the TRC at outreach events and on the website as well as a Spanish language webinar, “What is Telemedicine?” both live and available on demand. The SWTRC also developed an advertising campaign

for each state in their region working with NPR stations to periodically play TRC advertisements, especially prior to state-specific webinars and training events. Moving fully to virtual events in 2020, the SWTRC reached a much wider audience than in previous years through traditional in-person educational events, thus, increasing its impact more broadly.

**“Your webinar from early April continues to positively influence my practice and I’m so grateful!”**

In 2020, the SWTRC experienced a 140% increase in Technical Assistance requests compared to 2019 due to the coronavirus pandemic, and in particular saw an increase in requests about telemedicine services from patients. In response to requests for assistance, the SWTRC produced two targeted webinars to educate and inform the general patient population on COVID-19.

Early in the crisis, on the provider side, the SWTRC saw an increase in Technical Assistance requests from small clinics, those in private practice and from practitioners in rehabilitation services such as occupational



### REGIONAL CENTER

Elizabeth A. Krupinski, PhD, Co-Director; Ronald S. Weinstein, MD, Co-Director | southwesttrc.org

therapy, physical therapy and speech language therapy. The SWTRC’s training and webinar events experienced an average 300% increase in attendees compared to 2019 with participation from a much broader range of providers (e.g., occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech language therapy) and other attendees (e.g., administrators, and IT. Visits to the SWTRC’s website increased significantly, especially for access to education modules, blogs and COVID-19 resource pages.

The SWTRC also saw an increase in the number of requests for presentations at conferences and small meetings at organizations and associations. Overall, the SWTRC responded to increased demands created by the COVID-19 pandemic by expanding the number of training and informational webinars compared to previous years, generating new educational materials for providers and patients, creating a dedicated webpage (<https://southwesttrc.org/resources/covid19>) for general and state-specific COVID-19 materials, developing a newsletter focused on COVID-19-related information, and publishing a number of COVID-19-related blogs (<https://southwesttrc.org/blog>). ■

# TexLa TRC

## TexLa Telehealth Resource Center



TexLa TRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a two-state region. In 2020, TexLa experienced a 194% increase in Technical Assistance requests as compared to 2019. TexLa TRC is recognized in the region as the “go to” for telehealth information and assistance, particularly in the areas of policy and reimbursement.

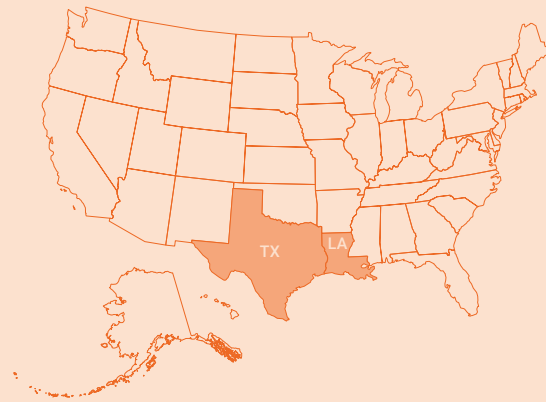
In 2020, redesign of the TexLa TRC website helped position the TRC to be able to rapidly respond to the surge in Technical

**“Thank you for the resources that assisted in the development and now implementation of the new Virtual Care department at Parkland Health and Hospital System.”**

Assistance requests as the COVID-19 public health emergency by: (1) updating the website with COVID-19 resources; (2) restructuring internal resources to remove administrative burden for staff providing direct Technical Assistance, Outreach and Education; (3) providing Virtual Office Hours focused on changes to telehealth policy and reimbursement due to the public health emergency and CARES Act; (4) telehealth and COVID-19 updates via weekly webinars with Well-Ahead Louisiana; (5) regularly scheduled live Telemedicine 101 adapted for rapid implementation of telehealth during the PHE; educational webinars on USDA DLT Grant Writing Workshop and Virtual Telehealth Technology Showcase by TTAC; (6) rapidly converting a hands-on telehealth training curriculum to online only; (7) development of a telehealth high school course in west Texas to train coordinators and assistants for telehealth services; (8) development of additional resources to answer FAQs including resource sheets for Consent, Patient FAQs, Telehealth Etiquette, and Platform Selection; (9) in place of an annual conference, produced a weekly Summer Webinar Series in July, 2020; (10) webinars addressing Telehealth Policy, Technology, Reimbursement, Choosing a Service Provider, and Lessons Learned: Ramping Up Telehealth During a Pandemic are available via the TexLa website; and (11) development of a COVID-19 and Telehealth Project ECHO.

Overall, in response to the increase in Technical Assistance requests with the COVID-19 pandemic, TexLa increased educational opportunities and saw significant increases in training and educational events’ attendance. TexLa TRC continues to develop relationships within Louisiana and Texas and beyond.

Collaborations with regional organizations assisted to disseminate timely updates to their members including: Louisiana Primary Care Association, Texas Association of Community Health Centers, Texas Association of Rural Health Clinics, Texas Organization for Rural Community Hospitals, Texas Office of Rural Health, Louisiana Health Department/Well-Ahead Louisiana/LA Office of Rural Health – partners providing TexLa TRC support in Louisiana, CMS Regional Office, Louisiana and Texas Medicaid Offices, and Louisiana and Texas Rural Health Associations. Many new organizations reached out to TexLa TRC in 2020 including the Association of Community Cancer Centers, Vizient – a national membership-based performance improvement organization, Texas Pediatric Society, South Texas Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Association of American Medical Colleges – development of telemedicine curriculum for medical students. ■

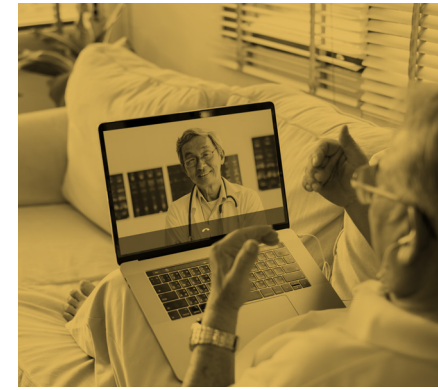


### REGIONAL CENTER

Ariel Santos, MD, Principal Investigator  
☐ [texlatrc.org](http://texlatrc.org)

# UMTRC

## Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center



UMTRC promotes the advancement of telehealth across a four-state region. In 2020, UMTRC fielded increased numbers of requests for Technical Assistance in Indiana (139), Illinois (148), Ohio (110), Michigan (123) and Outside of Service area (41). The top three topics for Technical Assistance were policy/legal (369), COVID-19 (358), and financial (283). In 2020 a total of 112 Outreach activities were completed with a total of 8,890 individuals in attendance. Additionally, the UMTRC experience an increase of over 206% website visits compared to 2019.

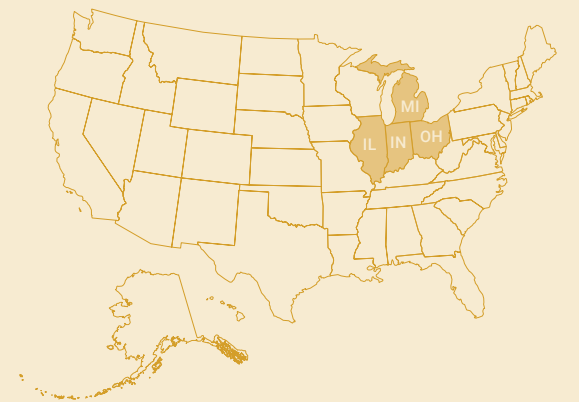
The UMTRC 2020 Annual Conference in July transitioned from an in-person event to a virtual event, due to COVID-19. Attendance at the event nearly doubled between 2019 and 2020. In 2020, the UMTRC increased the frequency of webinars from quarterly to monthly, providing stakeholders with two to four educational webinars each month. UMTRC also initiated a new podcasts series

called “A Virtual View.” The UMTRC modified their bi-monthly Virtual Office Hours to be tailored to specific hot topics based on the analysis of Technical Assistance data questions.

In 2020, UMTRC partnered with organizations to provide tailored resources and training modules for several programs including assisting in college curriculum development on telehealth. Examples include day-long workshops for the Michigan Genetics Network, Altarum’s Responding to Adolescent Depression through Integration and Telemedicine (RAD-IT) program and a webinar specifically on maternal health for the Ohio Department of Health’s Maternity Mortality program.

UMTRC outreach exploded in 2020 with the unprecedented interest in telehealth due to COVID-19 and the rapid changes in policy and reimbursement from Medicare and state Medicaid programs. Increasing access for patients to be seen via telehealth while in the comfort of their own homes brought telehealth policy and reimbursement into the 21st century. These policy changes also sparked a tsunami of interest in remote patient monitoring and chronic care

**“The UMTRC has been instrumental in helping my team understand telehealth and the telehealth landscape for rural clinicians... the UMTRC continues to be an indispensable resource for our team, answering our questions quickly with the practical, evidence-backed, and digestible expertise we need...”**



### REGIONAL CENTER

Becky Sanders, MBA, Program Director  
☐ [umtrc.org](http://umtrc.org)

# 2020 In Conclusion

In 2020, the NCTRC assisted and educated thousands of stakeholders across our communities, states, territories, and nation. In particular, the demands for telehealth technical assistance, information and training by the TRCs skyrocketed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Through extensive experience, expertise, and partnerships with stakeholders across the healthcare industry, the NCTRC rose to the challenge to help the nation advance telehealth solutions during a challenging time.

## Contact the NCTRC for assistance:

We welcome the opportunity to connect with new partners and colleagues who believe in helping Americans receive quality healthcare through telehealth solutions. Please reach out to us at:

**Address:** P.O. Box 981655,  
West Sacramento, CA 95798

**Email:** [nctrc@cchpca.org](mailto:nctrc@cchpca.org)

**Twitter/Facebook:** @TheNCTRC

**Website:** [telehealthresourcecenter.org](http://telehealthresourcecenter.org)





[telehealthresourcecenter.org](http://telehealthresourcecenter.org)

P.O. Box 981655,  
West Sacramento, CA 95798