NCTRC Annual Report 2022

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Introduction

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers (NCTRC) is pleased to provide this annual report on its activities for 2022. As the second full year of the COVID-19 pandemic comes to a close, telehealth continues to remain an important tool to ensure people continue to receive the health care services they need. The fourteen telehealth resource centers (TRCs) continue to provide the invaluable technical assistance, training and educational materials and resources to the nation’s health care system and citizens.

About the NCTRC

The TRCs are 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) and they collectively make up the NCTRC. The NCTRC is a collaborative of the 12 regional and 2 national TRCs committed to assisting organizations in the implementation of telehealth programs for rural and underserved communities. The 12 regional TRCs cover all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the affiliated Pacific Islands, along with two new jurisdictions in this fiscal year - Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. The remaining two centers have a national focus and include the Center for Connected Health Policy and the Telehealth Technology Assistance and Resource Center that focus on policy and telehealth technology, respectively.

Beginning in 2015, the 14 TRCs began working collaboratively to form the National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers (NCTRC). Forming the NCTRC has led to greater efficiency among the TRCs as they provide valuable telehealth technical assistance (TA), information and resources throughout the country. During the past year and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, TRC staff have worked tirelessly to assist healthcare organizations, providers, clinics, hospital systems, and universities implement sustainable telehealth programs. In 2022, the TRCs developed numerous resources, conducted telehealth trainings, and provided valuable information to both providers and patients alike.

The NCTRC provides unbiased, nonpartisan and expert telehealth technical assistance to various health care organizations throughout the country, with particular emphasis on rural and medically underserved areas. The regional TRCs are experts in telehealth implementation. TRCs are equipped to provide TA, training, education, and resources on various topics. Each TRC has a regional uniqueness, allowing them to provide a wide range of assistance that target local community needs. The NCTRC is dedicated to playing its part in expanding the reach of health care and sustainable telehealth programs in local, rural, and underserved communities for the most vulnerable populations.
CCHP continued to update and provide its widely used educational materials such as the 50 State Telehealth Policy Finder (which tracks all of the state Medicaid telehealth policies, laws and regulations), timely fact sheets on significant telehealth policies such as Medicare’s Physician Fee Schedule changes, and the very popular telehealth policy webinar series that was held twice in 2022, both in the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter.

TTAC’s staff and subject matter experts continued to provide telehealth technology answers to groups and individuals across the US. TTAC organized and hosted the NCTRC Virtual Technology Showcase in partnership with all 12 of the regional telehealth resource centers, and the Center for Connected Health Policy. TTAC also conducted our bi-annual telehealth technology survey, producing both national and regional resources focused on what trends are emerging in the type and usage of telehealth technologies. TTAC also began returning to live conference events in 2022, including multiple Telehealth Technology Showcase events at regional TRC conferences. TTAC also created video toolkit resources around key technologies being used in key telehealth use cases like EMS, RPM, DTC and School Based programs. TTAC has also increased focus on improving our social media presence, reach, and relevance.
Throughout 2022, CTRC has continued to provide free-of-cost, unbiased telehealth education materials, training and resources to patients and providers in the state of California. In the last year, CTRC hosted new monthly office hour series on diverse topics with over 800 registrants and provided 600+ hours in training, technical assistance and outreach to 2278+ individuals. CTRC focused on keeping up to date with its information and resources by publishing over a dozen new patient and provider resources, several of which have been translated into multiple languages. These new offerings include expanded patient education materials, seven new toolkits for relevant topics like technology assessment, considerations for vendor selection, Remote Patient Monitoring, and more, along with updates to popular existing resources like the Telehealth Billing Guide for California Providers and the FQHC/RHC Telehealth Reimbursement Course. Furthermore, CTRC produced four new blogs on a variety of topics from mental health to school-based telehealth and plans to continue to create more blogs in the upcoming year. CTRC provided a wide variety of resources like webinars, on demand courses, implementation workshops and needs assessments. Lastly, CTRC made improvement on the CalTRC.org website, to make it more accessible and user friendly. CTRC is planning on adding additional resources and webpages on School Based Telehealth and Remote Patient Monitoring in the upcoming months.

GPTRAC logged 174 TA events and over 100 Outreach events, including exhibiting or presenting at seven statewide conferences in five of our six states, and contributing to four national conferences (as part of NCTRC). We provided a full day of tele-dermatology demonstrations to the public at the Minnesota State Fair. We developed several new toolkits, including one on Collaborative Care for CHCs and one on home care in collaboration with the Minnesota Home Care Association, and maintained our detailed policy pages for all our sites on our newly redesigned website. We wrote and published several articles on state-specific Medicare telehealth utilization across our region and the country, as well as a specific analysis of telehealth use among nurse practitioners and physician assistants. Our advisory council continues to provide strong connections to our region, including monthly contact with all of our SORHs. We developed a video series on novel programs in telebehavioral health, and helped the Minnesota Department of Health design and review a state telehealth evaluation for the legislature. We contribute to multiple NCTRC committees, including leading the Data Committee and development of TRC Alpha. We hosted 115 attendees at our annual conference, and continue to publish our monthly newsletter to over 1,500 recipients.
Despite staff changes and program shifts, the HTRC has been successful in providing telehealth support and education to Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma programs. The HTRC hosts the Telemedicine ECHO 10-month series, in partnership with the Missouri Telehealth Network (MTN) Show-Me-ECHO program and the Oklahoma State University Health Sciences Center, launching the 2022-2023 series in October. For this next round, the focus is “Keeping Momentum in Telehealth”, providing didactics and case studies to sustain telehealth programs as the Public Health Emergency comes to an end, building peer networks and sharing best practices. Since beginning the podcast “Telehealth Unmuted” August 2021, the HTRC has shared 14 episodes into Season 2, with topics like care collaboration in rural health, increasing access to care for the LGBTQ+ community, and social determinants of telehealth. Additional education and outreach was also provided, including the HTRC Education Series, hosting their first “Pop-Up” webinar in March to share telehealth flexibility expansions as part of the Public Health Emergency status, with over 100 participants. The HTRC website was updated to provide a more efficient experience for users to access resources like archived webinars and ECHO sessions, links to partner TRCs, and contact information to request an eSTART readiness assessment, a tool to evaluate an organization’s current state to adopt a new telehealth program or to assess existing programs. As part of these resources, the Child Behavioral Telehealth Visit video was also created and launched during this time.

MATRC staff have had an incredibly busy calendar year! With just under a month left to go in the year, we have already fielded 297 requests for technical assistance from 170 new and 252 returning clients. While the vast majority (80%) of those we served came from our eight state plus DC service area, we also assisted individuals from 23 other states. This past year, we hosted a 2.5 day fully hybrid regional conference with 489 attendees and provided 45 different presentations and trainings, reaching over 2,300 participants. On top of that, we also created a number of enduring resources to address the needs of under-served populations including:

- a course module on Telehealth in Schools
- a Medicaid Telehealth Resource Guide for Virginia and Kentucky
• a Telehealth Community Response Implementation Guide for providing transgender services
• publications on Telehealth for Older Adults and with Rural Long-Term Care Facilities
• a consumer-facing set up tools and resources

This past year, the MATRC website generated over 21,000 hits. In order to be more responsive to our website visitors, this year MATRC has integrated a chatbot into the website. While currently still in beta-testing phase, MATRC will soon be launching a redesigned and better organized website; a web-portal focused on principles, guidelines and telehealth best practices for older adults; an interactive web-based performance improvement tool and a mapping application to support telehealth researchers and grant writers.

NETRC's 7th Annual Telehealth Conference was held in September 2021 – our first hybrid event ever, reaching over 200 stakeholders from across the region and beyond. A few additional NETRC training events included: co-hosting a multi-part webinar series on telebehavioral health for vulnerable populations with colleagues from HRSA's IEA Region 1 Office; serving as subject matter experts on a peer learning group hosted by the Reproductive Health National Training Center for Title X grantees; and delivering a breakout session focused on telehealth innovation at the National Network of Public Health Institute's 2022 Conference.

NETRC also developed multiple new resources based on needs identified by regional stakeholders, which can be found on our website and Telehealth Classroom. These include a course focused on Advancing Quality in Telehealth (AQT) – developed in collaboration with regional and national quality experts; a best-practice video on how to conduct physical exams via telehealth – developed in partnership with colleagues from MaineHealth; and Toolkits for eConsults, Community Health Workers and School-Based Telebehavioral Health.
The NRTRC continues to build upon its telehealth training courses with the addition of Telebehavioral Health 201 and Telehealth and Telebehavioral Health specific training for the State of Montana. These courses along with the previously published telehealth training courses, are offered virtually on the NRTRC website, nrtrc.org. The Telehealth training courses offer continuing medical education (CME) hours and are available at no charge.

This year, the NRTRC was able to demonstrate the advances, accelerations and opportunities in telehealth by hosting the 11th Annual Telehealth Conference, Innovation in Telehealth. This three-day hybrid event was held in Salt Lake City, Utah and kicked off with a grant writing workshop hosted by the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH). This event also included exemplary keynote speakers, break-out sessions, and excellent networking opportunities. The NRTRC also hosted the NCTRC annual in-person, two-day business meeting in Park City, Utah.

The Find Telehealth mapping application continues to grow as the NRTRC added independent providers who offer direct to patient telehealth services. This addition makes it easier for patients to find healthcare facilities that offer healthcare services via telehealth. NRTRC continues to provide this resource and others along with participating in educational events with their HRSA Region 8 & 10 partners, and stakeholder organizations.

In August 2022, the PBTRC held its second U.S. Affiliated Pacific Island Countries & Territories (USAPICT) Telehealth Workshop, which convened health care providers, technical staff, and administrators from the region to learn from subject matter experts, participate in telehealth-focused discussions, and plan jurisdictional next steps. Workshop outcomes include the development of jurisdictional goals and the identification of areas needing technical assistance. PBTRC continues to support community partners on various digital literacy projects that provide training materials for individuals with disabilities, such as videos for American Sign Language and closed captions. Additionally, PBTRC is partnering with the Hawai‘i State Department of Health and Hawai‘i State Library Systems to implement Telehealth Access Points (TAPs) in Hawai‘i’s public libraries in rural communities. PBTRC remains an active member of the Hawai‘i Broadband Hui, a collaboration of public and private organizations that support digital equity for ALL (access, literacy, and livelihood).
South Central Telehealth Resource Center (SCTRC)

AR KANSAS, MISSISSIPPI, AND TENNESSEE
Hari Eswaran, PhD, Principal Investigator, Co-Director & Wendy Ross, Co-Director
www.learntelehealth.org

The SCTRC continues to expand the SCTRC Telehealth Training Center initiative to support underserved areas in the Delta. Now serving six Telehealth Training Centers and offering multiple portable demo kits, providers have the opportunity to test digital health devices and experience first-hand how this technology can be used to benefit patient health. The Telehealth Training Centers also offer a hands-on learning environment for 2-year and 4-year college healthcare students preparing them to use this technology immediately upon graduation. This year, the SCTRC expanded its workforce development efforts to introduce digital healthcare and technology career paths to high schools. Additionally, the SCTRC partners with revenue cycle experts to develop clear, easy-to-use, and state-specific resources which includes Medicare, Medicaid, and private payer reimbursement information. Each quarter, billing guides are created to reflect the correct codes, rules, and other information that coders and clinicians need to efficiently process claims in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Celebrating over 10 years of service, the SCTRC will continue to provide ad hoc telehealth technical assistance for providers, researchers, and consumers.

Southeastern Telehealth Resource Center (SETRC)

ALABAMA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, PUERTO RICO, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND US VIRGIN ISLANDS
Rena Brewer, MA, RN, Principal Investigator
www.setrc.us

The SETRC has been partnering with Universities and AHECs to provide telehealth workforce capable of addressing the increased demand for the delivery of virtual healthcare. Training courses provided by SETRC include: 1) defining telehealth, 2) telehealth etiquette, 3) interprofessional collaboration, 4) regulations, 5) reimbursement. The SETRC uses various platforms when providing the training. Courses are followed up with a presentation that is done either virtually or in person. The SETRC also uses the Telehealth Learning Center (TLC), a mobile learning center that promotes experiential learning in an innovative and meaningful model. The TLC is fully equipped as a walk-up/walk-in telehealth discovery tool that includes a range of telehealth technologies for the purpose of observation and experience. The TLC is taken to universities, schools of higher learning, events, and venues throughout the region to allow clinicians, healthcare students, as well as the public to gain hands-on experience with telehealth.

To address the epidemic of pediatric autism and the critical lack of access to intervention services, the SETRC has launched the Toddler Tracks program. 50% or more of young children with autism do not receive treatment due to gaps in access and provider shortages. Toddler Tracks is a free online learning program for parents/caregivers and medical professionals to assist with early assessment and intervention for infants and toddlers presenting the symptoms of autism. The Toddler Tracks program helps close the gap for these children who are awaiting access to services.
Southwest Telehealth Resource Center (SWTRC)

ARIZONA, COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, NEVADA, AND FOUR CORNERS REGION
Elizabeth A. Krupinski, PhD, Director, Kris Erps Stewart, Program Administrator and Michael Holcomb, Technology Manager
www.southwesttrc.org

In 2022, SWTRC continued to provide timely and accurate telehealth information and resources to AZ, NM, CO, NV, the Four Corners region, and the nation with 34 webinars reaching 6,173 attendees. Of note was a special series on PT/OT telemedicine applications. We provided technical assistance to over 400 clients from 43 different types of organizations, 90% of which were first time clients. The most common inquiry topics were general information about telemedicine, legal, financial, market analysis, and training/education. New telehealth provider companies were also recruited to the opt-in national Telemedicine and Telehealth Service Provider Directory, which now lists 203 providers of clinical telehealth services. SWTRC expanded clients served, including tribal nations; and collaborated with the Arizona State Library, Pima County Health Department, Pima County Public Library, and University of Arizona College of Nursing to help Pima County Public Library develop its Health Connect telehealth project at select Pima County rural libraries. We actively participated in National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Center committees, meetings, and events. SWTRC published state-specific telehealth billing guides with periodic updates for each SWTRC region state; and published 12 monthly blogs and newsletters highlighting SWTRC state resources to thousands of subscribers. We held 3 training events in our Developing a Telemedicine Program track and 3 in our Telemedicine Applications track, with both virtual and live attendance to nearly 100 attendees from various backgrounds and telemedicine knowledge levels.

TexLa Telehealth Resource Center (TexLa TRC)

TEXAS AND LOUISIANA
Derrick Ramsey, Program Director & Ariel Santos MD, Principal Investigator
www.texlatrc.org

TexLa continues to focus its efforts on outreach and educational activities continuing to provide Project ECHO webinars, the annual Telehealth at the Crossroads Conference, and working with our AHEC centers to provide telehealth curriculum and lesson plans for high school health science and nursing students. The frontiers in telemedicine lab (FIT LAB) course trained over 60 providers in telehealth best practices. Our project ECHO telehealth series provided 11 sessions attended by 742 participants. Additionally, TexLa has begun to collaborate with the two HRSA Telehealth Centers of Excellence in both South Carolina and Mississippi, as well as other organizations and leaders within the telehealth space on a variety of projects and research.
Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center (UMTRC)

ILLINOIS, INDIANA, OHIO, AND MICHIGAN
Amnah Anwar, MPH, Program Director
www.umtrc.org

The UMTRC continued to develop outreach efforts – the 4th Annual UMTRC conference was held in South Bend, IN, for an audience of over 100 attendees and we completed the second season of our podcast, A Virtual View, with 19 episodes. Additionally, four quarterly state of the region virtual events highlighting federal and state-specific telehealth policy and legislative updates were held over the year. Monthly webinars were held to keep our region informed on relevant telehealth topics and UMTRC staff continued to provide excellent technical assistance via our website and our bi-monthly virtual office hours.

Special TRC Projects

Telehealth for FQHCs/RHCs Video Series

Several TRCs collaborated to develop a video series focusing on telehealth targeted towards Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs). These educational videos covered important topics such as process improvement, marketing, telehealth readiness, and chronic disease management.

Technology Toolkits

Telehealth Technology Needs and Readiness Assessment Toolkit

CTRC, in collaboration with TTAC, created several telehealth technology toolkits. The toolkits include a telehealth technology needs and readiness assessment, basic technology troubleshooting guide, and a virtual care room design toolkit. These training resources are ideal for healthcare professionals looking to improve existing skills and grow their telehealth programs.
Impact & Reach

The NCTRC works collaboratively to advance telehealth across the nation by providing services in these three areas: Expert Technical Assistance, Training, and Resources.

**Expert Technical Assistance:**
- Design and execution of needs assessments and program evaluations
- Identification of funding sources for strategic and business planning
- Selection and use of various telehealth technologies
- Policy analysis and guidance

**Training:**
- Educational programs through webinars, online training courses, regional conferences, & technology showcases
- Training on policies, technologies, implementation of best practices and sustainability

**Resources:**
- Development of toolkits, factsheets, and educational webinars
- Specialized tools and templates for telehealth programs and providers

As the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency remained in effect this year, the TRCs continued to assist various health care organizations navigate the ever-changing complexities of telehealth. The TRCs are staffed by some of the most experienced and knowledgeable telehealth experts in the country and they provide guidance on a wide range of topics that few can match. For example, the TRCs were asked to moderate and present several sessions as part of HRSA’s National Telehealth Conference, providing information on important telehealth topics such as remote patient monitoring and school-based telehealth. Policymakers on the state and federal level often seek out TRCs for information to assist in the formation of telehealth policy.

As seen in Table 1 on the following page TRCs collectively had about 4,000 technical assistance (TA) events and 7,000 contacts. TA questions ranged from reimbursement and licensure to technology and program assessments. TRCs also conducted educational webinars and office hours to educate the public on important telehealth topics. Several TRCs hosted in-person regional conferences to connect and collaborate with telehealth leaders within their respective regions.

Additionally, the NCTRC exhibited at five national conferences this year as listed below. TRCs also held presentations during several of these conferences to better inform conference attendees on the role of the NCTRC and the types of services and resources the TRCs provide.

**National Conferences:**
- American Telemedicine Association Annual Conference & Expo
- National Rural Health Association Annual Rural Health Conference
- Association for the Clinicians for the Underserved Annual Conference
- National Rural Health Association Critical Access Hospital Conference
- American Public Health Association Annual Meeting & Expo
Data Profile

TABLE 1. TA, contacts, outreach, resources, and website interactions from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Interaction</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance (TA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA Events</td>
<td>3,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Contacts Added</td>
<td>2,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning Contacts</td>
<td>4,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Contacts</td>
<td>6,863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Interaction</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Events</td>
<td>2,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (subset of outreach events)</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Participants</td>
<td>117,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact Sheet Downloads</td>
<td>1,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toolkit Downloads</td>
<td>2,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Hits</td>
<td>2,212,075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 1. Total number of TA recipients, TA events, COVID-19-related TA events, new contacts, and new contacts from outreach events from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.
FIGURE 2. Total number of outreach events and outreach participants from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

FIGURE 3. TA requests by organization type from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

FIGURE 4. Method of TA requests received and provided from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

FIGURE 5. Number of website hits from all TRCs combined from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.
NCTRC National Webinar Series

Every month, the NCTRC hosts an educational webinar, delivering virtual peer-to-peer webinar learning sessions to support the adoption of telemedicine across the nation.

TRCs host a different session each month centered on core topics surrounding telehealth. From these sessions, attendees learned:

- Basic telehealth knowledge in implementation and best practices.
- Learn from experienced peers, providing a sound foundation when setting up their own telehealth program.
- Accessibility to telehealth experts throughout the nation. TRCs were available throughout pre- and post-sessions to assist with overcoming barriers and issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEBINAR TOPIC</th>
<th>Number of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telehealth Policy Update: What Has Happened and What to Look for in 2022</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandemic Response Action Plan and the Opportunity to Use its Lessons to Improve Healthcare</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Health in Homes and Communities: Emerging Opportunities for Patient Engagement</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation &amp; Integration of Telehealth into Population Health</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Patient Portals and Improving the Virtual Experience</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Classic Tale of the Have-Nots: Disparities in Telehealth Availability in Rural Hospitals</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Futures: Telehealth During and After the Pandemic</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telehealth for Older Adults: Principles, Guidelines and Lessons Learned</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reimagining Reimbursements: Planning for Sustainability for Telehealth Practice</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline Pediatric Teledental Program for Nicklaus Children’s Health System</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telehealth Development and Expansion at Specialty Pediatric Health System</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total attendees</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,287</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The NCTRC has assisted countless healthcare providers, patients, academic institutions in 2022. With the regulatory changes in place due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, the support and growth for telehealth services will continue to grow. The TRCs are committed to provide expertise and education to advance the use of telehealth in rural and underserved communities.

Contact Us

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. Please reach out to us at:

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

- **Email:** nctrc@cchpca.org

- **Twitter/Facebook:** @TheNCTRC

- **Website:** www.telehealthresourcecenter.org