



Telehealth Resources: An Introduction

Telehealth is the use of electronic information and technology – including videoconferencing, internet, streaming media, wireless communications, and more – to support and deliver long-distance health care, health education, public health, and health administration.¹ Telehealth can be applied either as a real-time service or as a transmission of data from one site to another that a provider will review at a later time (called “store-and-forward”). Particularly in rural settings, telehealth offers the potential for a wealth of valuable services by providing access to specialty providers, assisting with remote home monitoring of chronic diseases, and more.²

Telehealth Resource Centers (TRCs) offer resources to support health care organizations, networks, and providers implement telehealth programs that serve rural and underserved communities. The TRCs are “funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, which is part of the Office of Rural Health Policy.”³ In the United States, there are a total of fourteen TRCs: twelve regional resource centers with state-specific expertise and various strengths, and two national centers (one focused on technology assessment, and one on telehealth-related policy). Read on to learn more about telehealth, the TRCs, and how you might implement or expand telehealth services.

- If you’re looking for a better understanding of telehealth and its benefits, check out the Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP)’s five-part [telehealth micro-documentary series](#) on their YouTube page. CCHP is the federally designated National Telehealth Policy Resource Center (NTRC-P).
- Regional TRCs provide free, helpful technical assistance to providers in their region who want to implement or expand telehealth programs. For a map of which TRC represents your state, check out this [TRC map](#).
- Interested in expanding telehealth use in your area, or suggesting this to policymakers? CCHP and South Central Telehealth Resource Center (SCTRC) developed a three-part training module series that can help you do just that. Read more about the modules [here](#), or visit the [CCHP national website](#) or the [SCTRC website](#).
- If you would like some examples of how telehealth can help achieve the Triple Aim, read Mario Gutierrez’ iHealthBeat article [here](#). For additional timely articles on telehealth, check out [CCHP’s newsroom](#).



- Want to know how some of the best telehealth programs look in practice? Check out the [Best Practices article](#) series, including the Bowen Center’s program, which provides mental health services to people in rural Indiana, and the ANGELS program, which provides perinatal services to women in rural Arkansas.
- Wondering how telehealth would work in a safety-net setting? CCHP conducted a three-year demonstration project with over forty California safety-net providers and the five University of California medical schools. Read the findings from this project [here](#) (executive summary) and [here](#) (full text).
- State and Federal policies and regulations can impact implementation of telehealth. CCHP also offers a variety of telehealth policy resources including a guide to the 50 states and the District of Columbia’s Medicaid policies on telehealth, analysis of recent federal telehealth legislation and administrative policies, telehealth bills introduced in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and model language for state legislation. Go [here](#) for more details on telehealth policy resources.

For further information, contact your regional TRC, or email CCHP at info@cchpca.org.

¹ <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/telehealth/>

² <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/telehealth-and-rural-health-care-delivery.aspx>

³ <http://www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/>

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Tell RHSATA about your rural health care delivery or financing innovation.
Go to <http://www.RuralHealthValue.org> and click on “Share Your Innovation.”