SCTA Quarterly Report
CY24 Quarter 3

Progress Achieved on the CY2024 Strategic Plan
July- September 2024

SOUTH CAROLINA
Telehealth
ALLIANCE

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South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA)

CY2024 Q3 Report

Executive Summary

South Carolina Telehealth Alliance partners remained engaged during the third quarter of calendar year 2024, (July 1 – September 30), continuing to fulfill strategic tactics outlined in the CY2024 SCTA Strategic Plan, while beginning to brainstorm their CY2025 telehealth deliverables.

Governor Henry McMaster proclaimed September 15-21 South Carolina's 8th Annual Telehealth Awareness Week, September 15-21, 2024, once again aligned with the American Telemedicine Association's (ATA) National Telehealth Awareness Week. The week was a success as SCTA partners dedicated the week to promoting telehealth offerings in their communities, various organizations participated in telehealth social media campaigns, and the SCTA collectively presented a letter of support to the South Carolina Congressional Delegation Staff to express the importance of extending Medicare telehealth flexibilities.

The SCTA looks forward to continuing statewide telehealth engagement and collaboration in Q4, as a proud diamond sponsor of the 12th Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina in October. This anticipated event, hosted by Palmetto Care Connections (PCC), brings together telehealth stakeholders, healthcare leaders, legislators, and others with the common goal of enhancing telehealth in South Carolina.

The following report provides additional details on the above accomplishments and others from **CY24Q3**.

SOUTH CAROLINA
Telehealth
ALLIANCE

South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA)
CY24Q3 Report

SCTA Statewide Strategy

While continuing to fulfill telehealth strategic tactics found within the CY2024 SCTA Statewide Strategic Plan, SCTA partners began the planning process for curating the CY25 Plan. Partners met internally in September to gather their CY25 telehealth deliverables and will share and discuss them with the SCTA team in October. Using partner deliverables, the SCTA team will draft the CY25 Plan and present it to the SCTA Advisory Council during the November 2024 meeting prior to finalizing in December.

Sustainability and Reimbursement Advocacy

During South Carolina's Telehealth Awareness Week in September, SCTA leaders held a virtual briefing with SC Congressional Delegation staff to discuss the importance of the existing Federal telehealth flexibilities in South Carolina. Delegation staff was presented with a letter of support signed by over 20 SC healthcare organizations, urging swift action to extend these flexibilities before they are set to expire on December 31, 2024. The response from Delegation staff was positive, and staff assured us the extension of the flexibilities remains a high priority.

SC DHHS released a bulletin in September stating that as of October 1, 2024, Behavioral Health Collaborative Care (CoCM) codes are covered. CoCM is an evidence-based model of behavioral health care which utilizes a Behavioral Health Care Manager and Psychiatric Consultant to manage a patient's behavioral health conditions in partnership with their Primary Care Provider. As this model of care is largely delivered remotely, CoCM is outlined as an SCTA payer priority and we are happy to have an updated payer scorecard reflecting this change on our website.

SCTA Supported Technologies, Equipment, & Platforms

The SCTA's premium instance of Doxy.Me, a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform, remains a free offering to SC providers. During the quarter, over **11,460 visits** occurred and **28 new providers** joined the instance.

SCTA partners continue to utilize the SCTA's data collection software, WIM, to record telehealth utilization and sites in the SC. This valuable tool helps paint a statewide picture of telehealth's statewide impact and helps identify geographical gaps in care that can be targeted as part of SCTA strategic initiatives.

The SCTA periodically receives telehealth technology, equipment, and platform related requests from organizations serving rural and underserved populations of the state. This quarter, the SCTA supported 8 requests for organizations including schools, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), a Board of Disabilities and Special Needs (BDSN), rural digital access sites, and a practice serving patients in rural areas of the state.

SCTA Digital Navigation & Connectivity Initiatives
The SCTA was excited to onboard a Digital Navigation Manager during the quarter dedicated to collaborative work alongside the SC Broadband Office and Palmetto Care Connections to increase access to care through digital literacy and broadband connectivity support. These initiatives will target SC's most vulnerable populations, providing solutions and support aimed to alleviate barriers to care related to the lack of digital literacy and internet access.

Medical University of South Carolina
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress
July – September, 2024

Service Extension

During the quarter, MUSC's Regional Telehealth Timeshare Clinics brought onboard a highly regarded gastrointestinal specialist with a focus on caring for patients with chronic digestive conditions. In the coming quarter and extending into next year, the primary focus will be on strengthening the existing telehealth model for these clinics and enhancing operational efficiency for clinic staff. Strategic efforts will also be made to identify services that maximize value, with an emphasis on leveraging hosted visits to broaden access to care. Additionally, development is underway for a new timeshare clinic in Sumter, which is slated to open next quarter, further expanding regional access to specialized services.

Utilization of MUSC's Virtual Specialty Program continues to increase rapidly, serving approximately 3,000 patients each month across the state. To meet the growing demand, the program plans to add two additional sleep medicine providers to the team in Q4. Additionally, recruitment efforts are underway to onboard more endocrinology and benign hematology advanced practice providers. This valuable program continues to provide patients with the opportunity to receive specialty and primary care virtually, eliminating barriers to care such as long wait times for appointments.

Hospital Support

MUSC's Hospital Support Team supported several initiatives during Q3, including the continued expansion of MUSC's Virtual Nursing Program, which launched in new units across the MUSC Pee Dee, MUSC Midlands, and MUSC Charleston Divisions. The team will continue these expansion efforts with the program's ongoing success.

Inpatient cardiology telehealth services expanded to a second location during the quarter at MUSC Health Chester Medical Center. To expand hematology inpatient services at MUSC Health University Medical Center (Charleston), a telehealth service for on-demand consultations was introduced. MUSC's Tele-Stroke Program began collaborating with the MUSC Charleston Division team to establish statewide quality metrics for program goals. Development and enhancements are expected to continue for several new inpatient services in the coming quarter.

Convenient Care

The MUSC Virtual Urgent Care program has continued to build a strong and impactful partnership with correctional institutions statewide, conducting regular case reviews to ensure proper triage and facilitate higher levels of care when needed. Since the program's inception, it has served an average of 30 inmates monthly, underscoring its role in improving healthcare access within the correctional system.

Moreover, the Virtual Urgent Care program has significantly enhanced the patient experience by introducing synchronous connections, which help prevent unnecessary referrals and streamline care. This approach has allowed over 400 patients to receive further treatment, reducing the frequency of repeat visits. For cases requiring in-person care, providers assist patients in locating local urgent care facilities, ensuring continuity of care. Moving forward, the program will prioritize ongoing improvements in patient experience and provider efficiency, with a focus on enhancing platform reliability and optimizing service delivery.

Primary Care Support
The MUSC Center for Telehealth was awarded a HRSA grant to fund the creation of the SC Rural Telehealth-enabled Collaborative Care Network (SC-RTECC). This initiative focuses on extending the Collaborative Care Model (CoCM) for psychiatry within primary care in two regions and health systems: MUSC Health Orangeburg Primary Care, which includes 9 sites, and Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comprehensive Health Services (BJHCHS), with 11 sites. This grant, combined with steady growth over recent quarters, has enabled MUSC to hire two additional behavioral health managers. By early 2025, all divisions at MUSC will be able to refer patients for participation in CoCM, and non-MUSC partner sites, like BJHCHS, will begin referring later in the year.

The MUSC Remote Patient Monitoring Hypertension program is experiencing significant growth, with nearly 100 patients currently under active monitoring. We are collaborating with 34 distinct providers across 20 clinics in three MUSC Divisions. At enrollment, the average blood pressure recorded is 154/81, and we have successfully reduced these levels to "controlled hypertension" within an average of 102 days. We are continually exploring new specialties to enhance our offerings, with diabetes management being the next area of focus.

The MUSC Center for Telehealth eConsults program serves as an asynchronous provider-to-provider tool that optimizes communication while delivering substantial cost and time savings, providing specialty care to patients in collaboration with their primary care provider. Currently, 11 specialties provide services, with plans to actively expand this initiative. In the coming months, we will also be integrating pediatrics into this program.

Health Equity
Through continued collaboration, MUSC's school-based telehealth team expanded its physical health telehealth services to 14 new schools and its behavioral health telehealth services to 26 new schools during the quarter. The team anticipates continued demand for these services, with active engagement from several new schools across the state. Fully prepared to serve these students, the physical health team is now equipped with 3 full-time and 2 part-time providers, and the behavioral health telehealth team has expanded to include 10 therapists and 4 psychiatrists. The school-based behavioral health telehealth team also expanded its service offerings during the quarter, launching a new "on-demand" service that allows students to access a behavioral health specialist in real time.

In partnership with the MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness, MUSC's school-based telehealth team, and MUSC's pediatric endocrinology division, students in Colleton County with diabetes continued to receive access to pediatric endocrinology care while at school. The MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness also partnered with the school-based telehealth team to implement a pilot program offering wellness screenings in high schools for students who could benefit from therapeutic monitoring and activities/wellness education. The pilot launched at its first school in Dorchester County and plans to expand in the next quarter.

McLeod Health
The Choice for Medical Excellence

McLeod Health Telehealth Service Updates and Progress

CY24Q3 / July – September 2024

Service Extension:

During CY24Q3, there has been an effort to increase Epic MyChart and virtual visits through provider education and training. This includes retraining the Palliative Care providers on the workflow to increase the number of visits.

Hospital Support:

Migration to the Pexip platform was a success! Over 150 virtual providers were trained and transitioned to the new platform on August 5th. Pexip has provided a more stable connection to ensure patients receive the best care. The migration has helped optimize TelePsych, TeleNeuro, and several other programs.

Optimizing the Remote Sitter program continues to be a central focus at MRMC. With 24/7 coverage and the replacement of 1:1 in person sitters to 1:12 virtual patient monitors, this program promptly alerts clinical staff to any safety concerns. The program Go Live was in December 2023. An estimated 350 active monitoring sessions recorded with current work in progress to expand to one of the rural campuses.

Working with the Prisma team to optimize the Children's Hospital Specialty Consults is still a work in progress. Working to increase accessibility through video visits between the patient, family, and the provider to decrease unnecessary transfers.

Our Virtual Provider has been working with the outpatient Palliative Care team to optimize the program by helping with workflows to increase Epic televisits.

Convenient Care:

Direct-to-Consumer Program: During the summer months there was a decline in patient visits but as the season changed, numbers increased. The patient satisfaction with these visits remained the same. The program is easily accessible via website or mobile. We will push to market this program with the upcoming flu season.

Primary Care Support:

Focus on Primary Care site surveys for technology readiness and workflow training.

Health Equity:

McLeod Health's School Based Care Telehealth program is off to a great start for school year 24-25. Lauren Johnson, School Based Care Provider, has seen a total of 37 visits so far. We are looking for the numbers to increase with the upcoming cold and flu season.

The Forensic Nurse Examiner program with the addition of SDFI Telemedicine Technology is growing in volume. The SDFI technology enables our nurses to connect asynchronously with law enforcement in a secure encrypted way to provide protected health information (PHI). This program has helped bring justice to victims of violent crimes.

Prisma Health
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress
(Q3: July – Sept. 2024)

Service Extension

During this quarter Prisma Health's Digital Health team focused on upgrades to two of our video vendor platforms. These enhancements worked to improve the patient experience. With our Vidyo platform providers are now able to send a direct Vidyo visit link to patients from Epic, allowing them to join the visit directly without going through MyChart. This is especially helpful in situations where a patient has trouble logging into MyChart or does not have a MyChart account. The team added a new feature to our Vidyo platform, Breakout Rooms, allowing the moderator to separate the call participants into smaller groups for privacy or potentially for medical consultation with other health professionals. Enhancements to the Doximity platform enabled bulk text messaging, increased total number of participants allowed in a visit, and enabled scheduling texts for appointment reminders.

Two new workflows were designed and implemented in the pediatric space. The team designed a new workflow in Tele-Neonatology that created an urgent consult alert/escalation notification resulting in faster connection times. Another new workflow developed and implemented was a neo-transfer virtual room. This workflow allows for parents/caregivers to virtually meet their new physician/care team at the site where an infant is being transferred to before the transfer occurs.

Hospital Support

Creation of new virtual care workflows in transplant, pharmacy, and case management areas extended patient access for initial consultations, medication management, and follow-up visits. Additionally, Palliative Care consultations and rounding were added for pediatric inpatients.

Enhancements were made to several hospital workflows to improve the overall experience for both our patients and providers. A Tyto Pro stethoscope was added to inpatient ICU units, allowing providers to assess respiratory function more accurately. New equipment was installed to enhance audio and video quality of provider-to-patient consults in virtual ICU settings, with updated training on process and workflow provided for the staff. Schedules for the Teladoc carts were built in Epic to allow for cart reservation.

The Prisma Health ITS Digital Health team partnered with Teladoc to expand support functionality and user management to our IT department directly allowing for expedited provider access. The Digital Health team transitioned all Teledoc carts to an upgraded network and upgraded all required certificates.

Early data confirms the positive feedback we are seeing with our virtual nursing programs. This program has saved an average of 26 minutes per shift for bedside nurses. The Virtual Care Partner leadership presented the work done at Prisma Health at the recent Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses Conference in Toronto, Canada.

Convenient Care

For convenient care, the focus this quarter was two-fold. Determining a replacement vendor for our current E-Visit vendor was a top priority. The decision was made to move forward with Epic's native E-Visit workflow. The teams met with operations to create crosswalks between the current system and the modules that Epic provides. Anticipated go-live for this new technology and workflow is next quarter.

Another priority was successfully completing re-education of our Prisma Health Team Member Care Center staff on the use of TytoCare devices in delivering care to Prisma Health staff.

Primary Care Support

Promotion of out of state licensed physicians available to extend care to our patients while on summer vacations helped extend primary care support. This allowed patients to stay in contact with their PCP while traveling versus seeking care in their current vacation area. Visits for patients in Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida were successfully completed.

Implementation of a headset campaign in Prisma Health pediatric offices in Spartanburg helped to improve the audio scores on patient satisfaction surveys. Resolution of other audio issues during workflow design review decreased the number of disruptions prior to visit initiation between the provider and patient.

Based on increased screenings for social drivers of health, the offering of virtual visits as a solution to lack of transportation and caregiver access to see patients were initiated. These visits helped reach those patients who previously were not compliant with their scheduled in person visits because of these limitations.

Prisma Health developed a new hypertension protocol that recommends a 4-week follow up for any patient with uncontrolled hypertension or any patient who has a medication change. Without virtual care options, there would not be provider or patient engagement to meet that protocol, which has been successful in improving the control of hypertension in Prisma Heath by a significant margin. At the end of August, over 77% of Prisma patients with high blood pressure are now at target.

Health Snap, a remote patient monitoring program, was implemented across all Prisma Health primary care locations. This service offers remote monitoring using blood pressure cuffs, glucose monitors, scales, and pulse oximeters to treat conditions of Hypertension, Diabetes, CHF, and COPD.

Health Equity

Due to increased demand in rural locations of Oconee County, virtual lactation classes and support groups were expanded. This work required adding and educating an additional Lactation Consultant/Educator. Additionally, refresher training using mock consultations was provided for pediatric specialist at Oconee Memorial Hospital. This approach gave these physicians more confidence in their ability to use the virtual technology at this rural hospital.

Pediatric Hematologic Oncology specialty embarked on a new telehealth avenue to stay connected to their patients while away at various summer camps, ensuring no gaps in care. This program also included a regional juvenile detention agency to secure scheduled visits with this at-risk population.

The Prisma Health team worked to increase the number of pediatric therapists using telehealth visits through DSS to lessen the number of "no shows" for this population. A new Pediatric Forensic physician was trained on our EVA camera system (using telehealth components) for our rural sites that included our Clinton location.

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION:
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State of South Carolina
Department of Mental Health

South Carolina Department of Mental Health
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress
Q3, October 2024

Service Extension

DMH's Community Telepsychiatry program helps increase access to mental healthcare by providing telepsychiatry services through 60 Mental Health Centers and satellite clinics statewide. DMH has helped patients in the state access specialized mental health care services, including child and adolescent psychiatry, since 2013.

In the third quarter, over 15,500 services, which is approximately 41% of overall mental health services provided by MDs and APRNs, were telepsychiatry. DMH's Community Telepsychiatry program serves patients in a wide variety of settings from Mental Health Centers and satellite clinics to schools and RV mobile clinics.

Hospital Support

DMH's Emergency Department (ED) Telepsychiatry program continued 27 hospital partners across the state and is in the process of adding new partners. In Q3 of calendar year 2024, the ED Telepsychiatry program provided approximately 1,748 completed consults for patients in EDs statewide. Psychiatric care is available through the ED program 17 hours per day, 364 days per year.

Primary Care Support

DMH's Integrated Care team has continued progress on the HRSA grant (American Rescue Plan Act – Pediatric Mental Health Care Access New Area Expansion) to develop the state's first child psychiatry access network to support the provision of mental health care by primary care providers. The network was named the Youth Access to Psychiatry Program (YAP-P). The goal is to provide a continuum of supports to SC primary care providers who see children and youth ages 0-21 years. YAP-P provides resources to practices and providers statewide.

Funding began in the fall of 2021 for the 5-year grant. YAP-P also received a $300,000 expansion award in the fall of 2022 from HRSA to look at expanding the network to include school-based health centers (SBHCs).

Health Equity

DMH's partnership continues with the SC Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to provide child telepsychiatry services to DJJ minors with mental health concerns in secure facilities. This partnership helps address the mental health needs of children involved with the juvenile justice system. To facilitate evaluation and treatment, an APRN supports the remote DMH child and adolescent psychiatrist.

In addition, DMH provides an interagency consultation service with the SC Department of Social Services (DSS) and DJJ to furnish telepsychiatry to at risk children and adolescents. Children referred by DJJ for this program are not located in secure facilities. This innovative collaboration among state agencies promotes cooperative working relationships to make the best use of state resources for a high needs population.

Service Extension

During the third quarter of 2024, Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System continued to offer and encourage utilization of EMR-based video visits as an option for patients to be seen when applicable. Telehealth Services staff continued to visit Medical Group of the Carolinas practices to educate providers and front office staff on functionality, scheduling steps, billing compliance, and best practices. A highlight was an increase in the use of virtual consults in our OB/Gyn practices, primarily focused on post-partum depression screenings and follow-ups.

The Post-Acute Division also implemented a TeleHospice Program, allowing providers to see patients in-home for care and screening. The measures of success for this program focus on improved efficiency, staff workflow, and patient comfort.

Hospital Support

Q3 also saw continued improvements in outcomes for emergent stroke patients, which can be attributed to ongoing assessment and adjustments to workflows, network infrastructure, and training. SRHS expanded telepsychiatry services to additional inpatient units at Cherokee Medical Center and Pelham Medical Center, improving patient care and disposition determination.

Convenient Care

The SRHS Virtual Urgent Care platform continues to see an increase in utilization. A marketing campaign for the service began in August, consisting of online advertising, social media promotion, and campaigning to area schools and businesses.

A Virtual Employee Health program also was launched in July, allowing for remote and new hire employees to meet with Employee Health providers to meet system requirements and access care without needing to visit a SRHS Employee Health location.

Primary Care Support

In Q3, SRHS secured funding to implement a new, enterprise-wide remote patient monitoring program, Initial focus will be on improving the health of diabetic patients in our rural service areas through remote patient monitoring equipment and establishing a scalable model for expansion and use.

Health Equity

The SRHS Heart Failure Clinic secured funding to expand its Mobile Integrated Health Paramedicine Program to include new equipment, another vehicle, and an additional staff member. This expansion allows for more patients to enroll in the program and to be seen sooner and more frequently.

Q3 also saw the expansion of SRHS's School-Based Telehealth Program, adding an additional school in Cherokee County, as well as establishing a pilot program with Union County Schools.

October 10, 2024

The SC Area Health Education Consortium has focused on ensuring up-to-date telehealth education resources are available on-demand for all health professionals and future health professionals in South Carolina. SCTA funding has helped to support SC AHEC in developing and supporting online telehealth courses. SC AHEC developed and maintains these on-demand programs at no-cost for current health workforce and health profession students in South Carolina via the SC AHEC Learning Portal.

The educational programs listed below support the Supporting Tactical Goal, Education and Training within the CY2024 SCTA Statewide Strategic Plan.

SC AHEC Telehealth Training Attendance
(Date range 7/1/2024-9/30/2024)

1. Telehealth for High School and College Students – **10 Attendees**

2. Telehealth Presenter Certification – **23 Attendees**

3. Telemental Health – **23 Attendees**

4. Foundations of Telehealth – **65 Attendees**

5. Telehealth Implementation – **17 Attendees**

6. Interprofessional Team Case Conference (ITCC) – **17 Attendees**

155 Individuals attended a telehealth training from SC AHEC during July-September 2024.

www.scahec.net
(843) 792-4431 / (843) 792-4430 Fax
The South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium is an equal opportunity employer.

October 25, 2024
South Carolina ETV
Calendar Year 2024 Quarter 3 Report
South Carolina Telehealth Alliance

As we wrap up the third quarter, the *SCETV Telehealth Team* is proud to share the significant strides we've made in raising awareness about telehealth through engaging and impactful storytelling. Our team has produced a variety of content showcasing the benefits and accessibility of telehealth services.

In July, we tagged along with a school nurse as she hustled to meet the constant needs of students coming into the school clinic for care. Her students receive school-based telehealth services, including school-based behavioral health care. Her story is a powerful testimonial to the positive impact that school-based telehealth services make in the lives of children and their families.

In August, we were honored for the opportunity to produce a video about a teenage girl who overcame an eating disorder because of virtual care through Prisma Health's Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine. If not for telehealth, this young person would not have been able to receive life-saving care that allowed her to turn a corner and beat that disease.

For Telehealth Awareness Week, we created a social media toolkit including two new videos and dozens of graphics for SCTA partners to share on social media platforms. Leading up to the annual awareness campaign, and throughout the week, we posted content on social media to highlight the different ways that telehealth improves the lives of people in the Palmetto State. In addition, we produced four radio stories that aired on SC Public Radio throughout Telehealth Awareness Week.

List of telehealth features:
 Video

- School-based mental health care services remove barriers to care, improve healthcare outcomes for students
- Teenager 'found her strength' to overcome eating disorder after treatment through telehealth
- Annual awareness campaign showcases value of virtual care
- South Carolina Telehealth Alliance reflects on a decade of advancements in telehealth

Radio

- My Telehealth: School-based mental health care services remove barriers to care, improve healthcare outcomes for students
- My Telehealth: Teenager 'found her strength' to overcome an eating disorder after treatment through telehealth
- My Telehealth: School-based health program helps child manage asthma
- My Telehealth: The lasting impact of digital literacy training for seniors

Press Release on SCETV for TAW

- South Carolina ETV Partnership Highlights Telehealth in South Carolina during Telehealth Awareness Week

This content is shared via television, email newsletters, multiple websites, and social media platforms.
Social Media spotlight: The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance Facebook page reach is up 16% from Q2. The post with highest reach and engagement was a TAW video that had 624 impressions and was played more than 840 times.

SCTA CY24 Q3 Report

Rural Practices and Telehealth
Telehealth in Libraries Implementation Workbook
The initial draft of the telehealth in libraries playbook has been shared with SCTA. After input and approval from SCTA, we will convene a workgroup of subject matter experts and stakeholders to provide input on the resource.

Telehealth Hubs
Orangeburg County Public Library
The upfit is still in progress. The library director and social worker were able to purchase a remote control to disable the camera and audio in the telehealth room. The blinds will be installed to complete the room. The social worker has received telepresenter training from PCC and MUSC.

Project ECHO
Project ECHO SC Pregnancy Wellness continues to be data driven, state centered, flexible and responsive to emergent healthcare challenges. Between June 2020 and September 2024, they have held 96 sessions, with approximately 3,700 participants. To monitor outcomes and evaluate programmatic success, the program created a participant evaluation survey. Survey responses will allow for assessment of the program's impact and to decide areas in need of refinement. September 23, 2024, was the first distribution date for the survey. Some of the responses to date have included the following: 37% of respondents strongly agree that ECHO sessions offer new ideas and resources; 28% of respondents strongly agree that ECHO sessions provide information that I will use in my practice; 40% of respondents have attended 5 or more ECHO sessions.

Telehealth Research
Original Research
In addition to the posters submitted in the quarter 2 reports, Dr. Megan Weis presented on a panel on "Community-Based Nontraditional Access Points for Telehealth" at the 2024 National Rural Health Association's annual Rural Health conference.
The Center is also partnering with Dr. Sicheng Wang at USC's Department of Geography to conduct a mixed-method study assessing the impact of telehealth on the perceived accessibility of prenatal care in rural South Carolina. This project is currently going through our administrative and contracting processes and is set to begin on January 1, 2025.

Digital Literacy Program Evaluation
PCC shared their evaluation materials with the CRPH team. Overall, the evaluation collects a broad range of data covering digital knowledge and utilization questions. After a thorough review, the CRPH team discussed potential changes with PCC, mainly around the language level used. There were concerns about making alterations to the data collection tools in the middle of implementation. This change would result in the team's inability to compare and pool previous cohorts' data. Since PCC asked the Center to lead the evaluation for their newly submitted NTIA grant (which would include an expansion of the digital literacy program), we agreed to wait to hear back before making any changes. If PCC is awarded the NTIA grant, the CRPH will revamp the digital literacy program evaluation to fit within the larger grant evaluation.

CY24Q3 July – September, 2024

Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) diligently works to improve access to healthcare services in rural and underserved communities in South Carolina through telehealth, technology, broadband and education.

Broadband
Adequate infrastructure such as broadband has been identified as a barrier to telehealth implementation. As the leader of South Carolina Broadband Consortium, PCC pursues various opportunities to provide solutions to address these barriers. In Quarter 3, PCC submitted a proposal for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) competitive grant to increase broadband and digital equity in South Carolina.

Telehealth
In Quarter 3, Palmetto Care Connections focused on telehealth training and implementation. The PCC Telehealth Team completed the Telehealth Implementation Bootcamp hosted by the Southeastern Telehealth Resource Center, University of Mississippi Medical Center-Center for Telehealth, Medical University of South Carolina, South Central Telehealth Resource Center and Texas Louisiana Telehealth Resource Center. The bootcamp offered sessions and resources to help guide future telehealth programs to success. PCC also assisted the Orangeburg County Library with telehealth training and equipment installation to offer telehealth services to its community.

Education
Palmetto Care Connections offers telehealth education to both healthcare providers and patients through webinars, videos, community events, and the Annual Telehealth Summit.

In Quarter 3, Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) partnered with Bamberg Family Practice and Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School to host a webinar about school-based telehealth. The webinar recording and presentation slides are available at www.palmettocareconnections.org .

In observance of Telehealth Awareness Week (September 15-21), PCC chose to promote telehealth awareness using the website, social media, and a patient testimonial.

Registration for the 12th Annual Telehealth Summit of SC is open. PCC is offering three Pre-Summit Sessions on October 28 at no cost. Also, attendees may apply for a scholarship to waive the registration fee. Scholarships are sponsored by the Summit Silver Sponsors.

Digital Inclusion
To increase digital equity and education in South Carolina, Palmetto Care Connections continues to focus on the five elements of digital inclusion: digital literacy training, online content and applications, internet enabled devices, technical support, and affordable internet solutions.

In Quarter 3, PCC along with the support of SC Department of Health and Human Services aimed to reach the needs of the underserved and unserved. To accommodate the needs of the targeted Medicaid Population, PCC coordinated "Distribution Days" in place of the 4-6 hour in person training. Each tablet is set up with an online training module that must be completed before gaining access to the other apps and functions of the tablet. The Distribution Day allows the participant or caregiver to pick up the digital device and complete the training at home. Participants also receive a packet that includes information about affordable internet solutions in their county and contact information for technical assistance.

PCC partnered with the Lowcountry Digital Equity Coalition to provide a Digital Navigator Training to the community. PCC also shared telehealth and digital inclusion resources at the South Carolina Association for Community Economic Development.