

# SOUTH CAROLINA Telehealth ALLIANCE

## SCTA Advisory Council Meeting

Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 1:00PM – 2:00PM

Virtual – Microsoft Teams

### Meeting Attendees:

Jimmy McElligott, Ragan Richardson, Sam D’Orio (SCTA), Emily Warr (MUSC), Kate Miccichi (McLeod), Kathy Schwarting, Davia Smith (PCC), Robin Gadd-Lane, Christian Steen (Prisma), Margaret Meriwether, Robert Bank (SC DMH), Elizabeth Harmon (SCHA), Sam Head (SC DHHS), John Magill (Member-at-large)

## 1. Welcome, Introductions, and Wins

### a. SCTA

- The SCTA will celebrate its 7th Annual SC Telehealth Awareness Week (TAW) in alignment with the American Telehealth Association's (ATA) National Telehealth Awareness Week, September 17-23, 2023! This dedicated week allows us to reflect on and showcase all that telehealth has provided to SC and feel proud of our accomplishments as a national leader in the field.
- Ways to participate in TAW:
  - Downloading the [Social Media Toolkit](#) to share on social media, using hashtags #TelehealthIsHealth and #TelehealthAwareness.
  - Following the SCTA on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to see and share telehealth videos, statistics, and events throughout the week.
  - Visiting [ATA's website](#) for additional TAW national [resources](#) and [events](#).
  - Hosting in-person or virtual telehealth-related events for patients, staff, and other stakeholders.
    - *Please reach out to the SCTA team if you plan to host an event. We will be happy to share on SCTA social media platforms, and with the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) to reach a national audience.*

### b. SCETV

- As a longstanding SCTA partner, SCETV continues to produce promotional content for telehealth in SC! If your organization would like to feature a telehealth program in a video, please reach out to SCTA Manager, Ragan Richardson ([ragan@sctelehealth.org](mailto:ragan@sctelehealth.org)).
- New Videos:
  - [Doctor Becomes Patient, Shares Experience with Telehealth \(Dr. Rick Foster\)](#)
  - [Virtual Counseling Helps Mother Overcome Trauma](#)
  - [Telehealth by the Numbers](#)
- Upcoming Videos:
  - Prisma’s Virtual Care Partnership
  - McLeod’s Tele-Psychiatry Program
  - ECHO Peer-Support Specialist Program
  - Telehealth Awareness Week

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## 2. Palmetto Care Connections

### a. 2023 Annual Telehealth Summit of SC

- The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina, hosted by SCTA partners Palmetto Care Connections, will be held December 4-6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the The Hyatt Regency in Greenville, SC.
- Please visit [PCC's Summit Info Page](#) to learn more about the following ways to participate:
  - Nominate a colleague for a Telehealth Award – **by Aug 31**
  - Submit an abstract for a presentation or poster – **by Aug 31**
  - Become a sponsor and exhibitor – **by Sep 15**
  - Register as an attendee – **early bird by Oct 15 \$225, regular by Nov 10 \$275**
  - Book a Hyatt Regency Hotel Room at a discounted rate – **by Nov 3**
- If you have any questions please reach out directly to Davia Smith, PCC Chief Community Relations Officer ([davias@palmettocareconnections.org](mailto:davias@palmettocareconnections.org)).

## 3. SCTA Procedural and Operational Items

### a. New SCTA Rural & Primary Care Workgroup

- The SCTA has introduced its new Rural and Primary Care Telehealth Workgroup with assistance from the Center for Primary Healthcare (CRPH) and Palmetto Care Connections (PCC).
- This workgroup is dedicated to understanding ways to improve and enhance telehealth in rural and primary care settings. Upcoming deliverables of the group include:
  - Dissemination of a survey that seeks to understand perspectives on the potential impact of telehealth parity in SC. CRPH will lead the survey dissemination process.
  - Help inform a MUSC Primary Care Planning Grant aimed to assess the utilization of primary care integrated telehealth services in SC, and identify ways to streamline and enhance these offerings statewide.
- If you would like to be a part of this committee, please email SCTA Administrative Assistant, Samantha D'Orio ([samantha@sctelehealth.org](mailto:samantha@sctelehealth.org)).

## 4. SCTA Statewide Strategic Plan

### a. CY23Q2 Report Highlights

- We thank our SCTA partners for their contributions toward the CY23Q2 SCTA Report!
- The report was provided to Council Members prior to this meeting for review and the finalized report will soon be available on the [SCTA Reports](#) webpage.

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## b. CY24 SCTA Strategic Planning

- It is time to begin creating the CY2024 SCTA Strategic Plan! Please see the graphic below for the proposed timeline.
  - **September** will be utilized for clinical partners to draft their CY24 deliverables. The SCTA team will combine these deliverables into cohesive tactics for each strategy.
  - **October** will be utilized for support partners to identify their CY24 deliverables based on needs from clinical partner deliverables. The SCTA team will combine support partner deliverables into cohesive support tactics.
  - **November** will be utilized to present the drafted plan during the Q4 SCTA Advisory Council Meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>, and finalize the plan prior to the holidays.
- *Individual quarterly deliverables by partners will not be presented in the CY24 plan, however, partners are still expected to report these milestones in their SCTA quarterly report throughout the year.*

## SCTA CY24 Strategic Planning

September	October:	November:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clinical partner CY24 deliverables requested.</li><li>• SCTA team compile into cohesive tactics by strategy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clinical strategies shared with support partners.</li><li>• Support partners provide CY24 deliverables.</li><li>• SCTA team compile into cohesive tactics.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed draft shared at Q4 SCTA Advisory Council Meeting – 11/16.</li><li>• Finalize plan prior to holidays!</li></ul>

## 5. Legislative and Advocacy Efforts

\*If you would like to become more involved with SC telehealth policy and advocacy efforts, please reach out to SCTA Administrative Assistant, Samantha D’Orio ([samantha@sctelehealth.org](mailto:samantha@sctelehealth.org)) to be added to the SCTA quarterly Sustainability Committee.

### a. 2024 Legislative Session Prep

- The SCTA, alongside the SC Medical Association and SC Hospital Association, introduced [House Bill 4159: Telehealth and Telemedicine Modernization Act](#) during CY23Q1 outlining goals to **introduce a new definition of “telehealth”** and **modernize telehealth prescribing language**. This bill unanimously passed through the House of Representatives during CY23Q2 and will be introduced to the SC Senate’s Medical Affairs Committee in 2024 during the next legislative session.
- The SCTA team continues to work alongside SC legislators and payers to align efforts and further telehealth sustainability in South Carolina. Initiatives to assess South Carolina’s telehealth coverage and payment landscape will be conducted by SCTA partners in the coming quarters to ensure success and identify future priorities.

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### b. Federal Updates

#### Medicare CY24 Physician Fee Schedule

- On July 13, 2023, CMS released its calendar year 2024 [proposed rule](#) for the physician fee schedule. The rule proposes extensions of several telehealth waivers including:
  - **CAA, 2023 Telehealth Provisions** – extended certain COVID-19 PHE flexibilities until December 31, 2024, including:
    - *Payment for telehealth services provided in any geographic location including the patient's home*
    - Allowing OT, PT, SLP, and audiologists to provide telehealth services.
    - Continuing payment for services provided by audio-only technology.
    - Allowing federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics to receive payment for telehealth services as distant site providers.
    - Delays the implementation of the in-person requirements for mental health telehealth services.
  - **Payment for Telehealth Services** - Proposes to pay for telehealth services furnished to patients in their homes at the non-facility PFS rate until December 31, 2024.
  - **Medicare Telehealth List** - Proposes to continue coverage and payment of telehealth services included on the Medicare Telehealth Services List (as of March 15, 2020) until December 31, 2024.
  - **Telehealth Services in Teaching Settings** - Proposes to allow teaching physicians to be present for the key portion of the service through real-time audio and video technology when the resident furnishes telehealth services in all residency training locations through the end of CY 2024.
  - **Direct Supervision of Clinical Staff** - Proposes to allow the supervising practitioner to meet the requirement of being present and immediately available through real-time audio and video interactive telecommunications through December 31, 2024. Requests information on whether this policy should be extended beyond 2024.
  - **RTM/RPM** - Proposes to allow PTs and OTs in private practices to supervise therapy assistants under general rather than direct supervision for RTM services.
- CMS will accept comments on the rule through September 11, 2023. Please contact Allie Dodd at [dodda@musc.edu](mailto:dodda@musc.edu) with questions/assistance on comment submissions

### c. CONNECT for Health Act

- The CONNECT for Health Act ([S. 2016](#)) was reintroduced by a bipartisan group of 60 senators (House companion bill H.R. 4189). Since it was first introduced in 2016, several provisions of the CONNECT for Health Act have been enacted into law or adopted by CMS. This iteration would:
  - Permanently remove all geographic restrictions on telehealth services and expand originating sites to include the home and other sites;
  - Permanently allow FQHCs and RHCs to provide telehealth services;
  - Allow more provider types to utilize telehealth services;

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- Remove the 6-month in-person visit requirement for telemental health services;
- Allow for the waiver of telehealth restrictions during public health emergencies;
- Require more published data on telehealth use, impact on quality of care, and potential improvements to better support patients and providers.

a. DEA

- The Biden Administration indicated in its Spring Regulatory Agenda that the DEA intends to finalize the pending rule that would update requirements for doctors prescribing controlled substances via telemedicine.
- In May, the DEA [extended](#) pandemic-era flexibilities for remote prescribing of controlled substances through November to allow more time for the agency to finalize proposed rules [Docket No. DEA-407](#) and [Docket No. DEA-948](#).

6. **Next SCTA Advisory Council Meeting:**

- b. Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 1:00PM – 2:00PM
- Virtual