

SOUTH CAROLINA  
**Telehealth**  
ALLIANCE

**SCTA Advisory Council Meeting**

Thursday, August 19, 2021, 1-3PM – Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:**

Mandy Williams & Sam Head (SC DHHS), Amelia Bischoff & Mark Wess (Prisma), Angelia Owens & Ryan Burnaugh (KMSO), Katie King, Jimmy McElligott, Ryan Kruis, Sonya Frankowski, & Ragan Richardson (MUSC/SCTA), Don Godish (SCETV), Kate Miccichi & Ashley Springs (McLeod) Kathy Schwarting (PCC), Senator Thomas Alexander (SC General Assembly), Kevin Bennett, Meera Narasimhan, Alanti McGill (USC), Rick Foster

**Agenda:**

**1. Welcome, Introductions, and Wins:**

- a. The Council welcomed Ragan Richardson as the new SCTA Coordinator. Ragan previously served as Administrative Assistant for the SCTA and COE with the MUSC Center for Telehealth.
- b. Prisma Health recently went live with an expanded health monitoring program, which includes complementary chat functionality. The current focus will be on hypertension and diabetes.
- c. The Council was introduced to Kate Miccichi, McLeod's new Director of Telehealth, who started in July 2021.
- d. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) officially renewed MUSC Center of Excellence funding for 5 years. The grant is shared with the University of Mississippi and focuses on research and evaluation of telehealth programs.

**2. Strategic Deliverables – Updates/Report Outs:**

**a. Data/Outcomes**

- **Service Extension:** The outcomes team is focused on Service Extension, namely identifying a source to establish baseline data on specialty care by county. The team is currently working to obtain a sample report using a Medicare data set, and will then focus on developing a heat-map of utilization rates to inform targeted future intervention and expansion.

**b. Education**

- Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) continues to offer its free Webinar Wednesday series. The PCC Annual Telehealth Summit is scheduled for November 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> and the call for presentations and nominations is currently open.
- **Service Extension:** PCC and SC AHEC are developing a workplan to operationalize the tactics outlined in the SCTA Strategic Plan, which are focused in the Service Extension domain.
  - SC AHEC and PCC will hold a focus group for rural and primary health care providers during the Summit, building off responses from SC AHEC's continuing education survey taking place in August.

- Additionally, responses from participants of SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare’s recent survey will also inform the education and training plan for the coming year.

#### c. **Broadband and Tech Infrastructure**

- South Carolina now has a dedicated SC Broadband Office through the Office of Regulatory Staff, which is focused on expanding internet using service area gap mapping. The maps can be found on ORS’s website, and will be updated every 6 months.
- **Service Extension:** PCC is focused on broadband and technology infrastructure, especially patient affordability, device accessibility and education.
  - To-date PCC has trained 65 seniors through its digital literacy program, and is working with SC DHEC to provide funding to 1,000 low-income households over 7 rural counties for devices.
- **Support Hospitals:** Work is beginning with SC Hospital Association (SCHA) to assess in-hospital connectivity, and develop a plan to address any identified gaps.

#### d. **Awareness**

- SCETV is developing its online toolkit for use through Telehealth Awareness Week (TAW), which will take place September 19-25<sup>th</sup>. They have also produced 2 TAW videos to be released on their website next week.
- **Service Extension:** Work is underway to create service-bucket-specific videos, starting with the Service Extension domain. The team is currently reviewing its existing library and categorizing stories into the appropriate strategic domains. Dr. Foster contributed a wonderful visualization idea of each domain represented as a puzzle piece.
- The SCETV team is also busy at work on a telehealth documentary, which will focus on the birth and evolution of telehealth, including the increase during the pandemic.
  - The team is working with each hub to gather information and interviews, with the goal of a late spring/early summer release date.
  - SCTA partners who have not received an outreach regarding this initiative should email Tabitha Safdi to get involved.
- Other projects in the works include developing content showcasing PCC’s digital literacy program, the palliative care telehealth program, and PCC Summit Award videos.

### 3. **Advocacy and Sustainability:**

#### a. **Payer priority brief –**

- The SCTA team is creating a payer policy brief that will help inform payer decisions regarding continued/future telehealth coverage (similar to the 2019 submission to SC DHHS). The document includes recommendations, description of services, and coverage considerations (data, evidence).
- Priorities in the brief include:
  - Removal of originating site restrictions
  - Inclusion of CMS-approved provider types
  - Coverage of
    - Telephonic codes/virtual check-ins
    - Chronic Care Remote Physiologic Monitoring

- Interprofessional Internet Consultation (eConsult)
- Behavioral Health Integration Codes

**b. Telemedicine Act -**

- The SCTA team is also reviewing the Telemedicine Act to identify opportunities for modernization, as telehealth has evolved significantly since the law was passed in 2016.

**c. Timeline and next steps**

- This is an all-hands-on-deck effort. Both the payer priority document and the Telemedicine Act will be sent to the Council and SCTA Sustainability Workgroup for review and comments within 1-2 weeks.
- Dr. Mark Wess noted potential benefits of engaging community providers and looking to other Southeastern states to align and support this effort.

**4. SCTA Updates:**

**a. Telehealth Awareness Week (TAW)**

- TAW will take place September 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> in alignment with the [American Telemedicine Association's \(ATA\) national TAW efforts](#).
- The SCTA team has been in communication with ATA to coordinate efforts as possible during the week:
  - SCTA will be included as an Endorsing Partner on ATA's TAW website
  - ATA also hopes to identify and recognize state lawmakers who've championed telehealth as TAW Policy Champions on its website
  - ATA will also promote SC TAW events on its calendar
- SCTA Partners are encouraged to organized events with their respective organizations. Examples of current efforts underway include:
  - The Governor's Proclamation request has been submitted
  - As Don noted, SCETV will have 2 TAW videos, and a toolkit for partners to leverage during the week for aligned branding and promotion
  - A Remote Patient Monitoring webinar is being planned in partnership with PCC and the SE Telehealth Resource Center (SETRC)
  - MUSC is planning a tour and/or round-table discussion with legislators (may take place virtually)
- Partners are encouraged to reach out to Ragan Richardson for SCTA and ATA cross-promotion of events, and/or a brainstorm session for TAW ideas.

**b. SCTA CY21Q2 Report**

- Thank you all for your patience and cooperation with our new and improved quarterly reporting and data submission process (introduced with the CY21Q2 report).
- Please review the report and send any edits or suggestions for improvement to Ragan Richardson by 8/26/21.

**c. Future Meetings: In-person vs. Virtual**

- The group discussed future meetings, and the Council will continue to convene virtually for the foreseeable future due to the COVID-19 Delta variant. Looking forward, the Council agreed that a balance of virtual meetings with 1-2 in-person

meetings per year would be beneficial for both the Council's productivity and face-to-face interaction.

**Next SCTA Advisory Council Meeting:**

**Thursday, November 18, 2021 from 1-3PM**  
**Microsoft Teams**