

---

# SCTA Quarterly Report

## CY21 Quarter 2

Progress Achieved on the CY2021 Strategic Plan  
April - June 2021

---

---

# Table of Contents

---

<b>CONTRIBUTER</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Executive Summary	3
SCTA	4
MUSC Health	5
McLeod Health	6
Prisma Health	7
SCDMH	8
SC AHEC	9
SCETV	10
SC Center for Rural & Primary Healthcare	11-12
Palmetto Care Connections	13-14



## South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA)

### CY2021 Q2 Report

### Executive Summary

South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) partners continued to build upon SC's strong telehealth infrastructure during the second quarter of calendar year 2021 (CY21Q2), all while continuing to operationalize the new Statewide Strategic Plan format. **McLeod Health, Prisma Health, and MUSC Health** continued to expand and enhance existing telehealth programs. The **SC Department of Mental Health (SCDMH)** continued to provide high-quality mental health care via their flagship telehealth programs. In addition, SCDMH ramped up a new mobile program to meet the ever-growing need for mental health services in rural areas.

In May, the SCTA Advisory Council welcomed new representatives from the **SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare, SC Children's Hospital Collaborative**, and a new member-at-large to help guide the strategic trajectory of telehealth in the state. Telehealth sustainability efforts remained strong in CY21Q2, with continued discussions with stakeholders to sustain the telehealth coverage and reimbursement landscape post-Public Health Emergency (PHE).

The following report provides further details on these and other accomplishments from CY21Q2.

# SOUTH CAROLINA Telehealth ALLIANCE

South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA)  
CY21Q2 Report

## **SCTA Strategic Plan – Progress on milestone development**

Progress continued during CY21Q2 in the development of strategic tactics and milestones through CY2022. Building off the previous quarter, collaborative milestones and tactics were finalized and shared with the SCTA Advisory Council during its May meeting. Tactical lead partners will convene through CY21Q3 to review and determine operationalization strategies for their respective tactics, and quarterly reporting will be adjusted so that SCTA partners' report-outs align directly with the finalized deliverables.

## **eConsult Pilot Program**

As reported in CY21Q1, the SCTA has partnered with ReferWell to extend access to specialty care in South Carolina through eConsults. EConsults are an asynchronous, provider-to-provider communication allowing primary care providers to securely connect with specialists regarding next steps in the care of a patient. During CY21Q2, the outreach effort expanded to include the planning of an educational webinar on eConsults and the potential benefits of a statewide eConsult model in South Carolina. The webinar will take place during CY21Q3 in partnership with Palmetto Care Connections.

## **SCTA Doxy.Me**

The SCTA continues to partner with Doxy.Me to offer free, premium-level memberships of the telehealth video platform to facilitate the use of telehealth across South Carolina. The SCTA Doxy.Me instance has over 1,500 users, completing almost 20,000 visits during CY21Q2. The SCTA aims to continue this offering for the foreseeable future, given the demonstrated ongoing satisfaction and usage from providers in the state, particularly those in smaller rural or community health center settings.

## **Sustainability and Reimbursement Advocacy**

SCTA leaders continued conversations with both public and private payers during CY21Q2, to understand and inform future decisions around telehealth coverage and payment post-public health emergency (PHE). Efforts will continue into CY21Q3, as payer strategies continue to formalize in preparation for the end of the PHE, and as the SCTA Sustainability Workgroup finalizes its advocacy priorities for CY2022.

Medical University of South Carolina  
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress  
April – June 2021

**Service Extension**

During CY21Q2, the MUSC team continued to optimize a pilot “Virtual Success Center” initiative, with nursing staff dedicated to assisting patients with connectivity issues and troubleshooting, creating a seamless ambulatory video visit experience. The pilot has quickly expanded to multiple clinics, and MUSC plans to continue expansion across specialties in CY21Q3. In addition, MUSC continues to improve quality of care by reducing high wait times for highly needed specialties in regional telehealth clinics. Just this quarter, MUSC Health – Grove Road in Greenville and MUSC Health Florence have added new providers and services for Endocrinology and Rheumatology.

**Hospital Support**

Hospital-based telehealth services completed an average of 2,400 consults across South Carolina hospitals during CY21Q2. The MUSC team worked diligently with an outside vendor to complete the build of new software platform, which will facilitate higher-quality and more reliable telehealth consultations to hospitals around the state. This two-year software project is set to go-live during CY21Q3. Additionally, MUSC’s partnerships continued to strengthen during the quarter, with the expansion of inpatient palliative services to Vibra Hospital of Charleston and in-patient psychiatry services to MUSC Health Lancaster.

**Convenient Care**

MUSC’s virtual urgent care program has focused on increasing utilization while demonstrating the value of the service. Moving away from a COVID-19 testing focus and towards targeted population health efforts, MUSC is advocating for increased access to virtual urgent care among the Medicaid population. Providers have continued to focus on virtual urgent situations necessitating clinical judgment, and patients have an easy and efficient way to obtain convenient care. During CY21Q2, MUSC conducted 10,243 virtual urgent care visits.

**Primary Care Support**

Telehealth services that support and empower primary care practices in the state remained strong during CY21Q2. Project ECHO programs coordinated through MUSC – Project ECHO Opioid Use Disorder, and Project ECHO Pregnancy Wellness, totaled 400 attendees this quarter, serving primary care practices across SC. MUSC’s Outpatient Telehealth (OT) Psychiatry program is planning provider expansion with three new advanced practice providers who will be doctoral-level nurse practitioners. These providers are expected to begin caring for patients in CY21Q3.

**Health Equity**

The goals of many of MUSC’s telehealth programs are to close the gap in access to healthcare services that target high-priority health disparities. Programs such as school-based telehealth, Telehealth for the Homeless, Women’s Reproductive Behavioral Health, and many more serve South Carolina’s most vulnerable populations. During CY21Q2, MUSC’s school-based telehealth program provided almost 450 visits, expanding to three schools in Colleton County. In addition, the telehealth partnership between MUSC and The Navigation Center in Charleston continued to provide vital healthcare services to patients experiencing homelessness. A recent patient survey demonstrated the value of this program, as over 50% of respondents noted they would have utilized emergency care or would have opted to not seek healthcare at all if not for this important telehealth program.

McLeod Health  
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress  
April – June 2021

### Service Extension

**EAP:** We are in the process of converting our Industry Kiosk from an AmWell platform to our internal platform.

**OccHealth - Industry Kiosk:** We are in the process of converting our Industry Kiosk from an AmWell platform to our internal platform.

**MDR (Multi-Disciplinary Review):** We are continuing to grow this program and have seen a interest in participation from other providers.

### Hospital Support

**Tele-ICU:** McLeod started a small-scale cart-based Tele-ICU program at our Dillon facility. We expanded to a more robust program with the addition of a camera and stationary monitor in each ICU room. We are now Tele-ICU to our Cheraw and Dillon facilities.

**Pediatric Sub-Specialty:** We partnered with Primsa Health to offer pediatric sub-specialties in the areas of neurology, pulmonology, nephrology, and hematology oncology.

### Convenient Care

**Convenient Care:** We continue to see visit Direct-to-Consumer volumes return to pre-COVID numbers and flatten out. McLeod is transitioning to a local vendor in September.

### Primary Care Support

**Diabetes Education – Home:** APRNs and Diabetes Educators provide educational sessions to patients referred by their primary care provider to the McLeod Chronic Care Management team. We are continuing to grow this service line.

**Pulmonary Inhaler Education:** Nurses provide inhaler education sessions to patients referred by a pulmonologist. We are continuing to grow this service line.

### Health Equity

**School-Based Telehealth Primary Care:** We have Clarendon 4 School District to our program, providing services to Dr. Rose H. Wilder Elementary, Scott's Branch Middle & High, East Clarendon Middle & High, Walker Gamble Elementary, and Summerton Early Childhood Center. Our go-live is September 1<sup>st</sup>.



Prisma Health  
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress  
April – June 2021

### **Service Extension**

Prisma Health continues to implement and broaden the use of core virtual care modalities in our ambulatory settings to extend the reach of services that would otherwise be limited by travel and related barriers to care. The continued expansion and use of enhanced virtual care technology has elevated our care teams' ability to screen and monitor our Senior Care patients from the comfort of their homes. This technology continues to be deployed in Primary Care and Pediatric practices for use by non-complex patients and families who may have frequent urgent care or emergency department visits but are otherwise healthy. Satellite clinics in Sumter, Orangeburg and Oconee counties continue to bring specialty care to these rural communities. Our Behavioral Health continues to expand and provide critical services to Senior Care facilities in our Upstate community. During quarter 2 of calendar year 2021 we have conducted 84K ambulatory virtual care visits.

### **Hospital Support**

Our acute care teams have continued and expanded the use of virtual care modalities to consult and treat patients at our hospitals where specialty care services are not available onsite 24/7. In addition to Infectious Disease and non-stroke Neurology consults, Toxicology consults are now available at all Upstate satellite facilities. Acute care video consults will be expanding to Pediatric Specialties in CY21. During quarter 2 of calendar year 2021 we have conducted 1,149 acute care consults.

### **Convenient Care**

The use of convenient care services continues to be a popular choice of Prisma Health patients. Our eVisit platform was integrated with Epic MyChart to allow patients 18 and older, to access this care seamlessly using their MyChart account. During quarter 2 of calendar year 2021 we have conducted 5,114 on demand video and eVisits.

### **Primary Care Support**

The use of primary support services continues to close the gaps in care for patients between office visits, while also helping our care teams to have a holistic view of the patients' care journey. A pilot for at home health monitoring for hypertension continues to expand using a phased approach in our internal medicine practices. Our diabetes management team continues to help patients manage their condition at home using remote monitoring technology. During quarter 2 of calendar year 2021, 406 patients have been monitored using remote monitoring technology.

### **Health Equity**

Health equity continues to be a focus for Prisma Health. Regional access points in our rural communities provide access to specialty care that would otherwise not be available. Our school-based care programs continue to provide both in person and virtual care. All schools have been upgraded to enhanced video and peripheral technology and are ready for the new school and in-person learning. During quarter 2 of calendar year 2021, 36 school-based care visits have been conducted.



# State of South Carolina

## Department of Mental Health

### MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION:

L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair  
Louise Haynes, Vice Chair  
Alison Y. Evans, PsyD  
Bob Hiott  
Elliott E. Levy, MD  
Bobby H. Mann, Jr.  
Crystal A. Smith Maxwell, MD

July 27, 2021

2414 Bull Street • P.O. Box 485  
Columbia, SC 29202  
Information: (803) 898-8581

**Kenneth M. Rogers, MD**  
State Director

### South Carolina Department of Mental Health Calendar Year 2021 Quarter 2 Report South Carolina Telehealth Alliance

This year, the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) seeks to remind South Carolinians of the importance of maintaining good mental health and the mental health services available to all, particularly in light of the uncertainty and difficulty so many have experienced over the past year.

“The past 18 months have been very difficult for everyone, but there may be a silver lining with regard to mental health, in particular,” said SCDMH State Director Kenneth Rogers, MD. “Many people who had never faced symptoms of mental health problems, like anxiety or depression, for instance, have experienced them for the first time. The past year and a half have also made clear to us, as a state and a nation, that good mental health is just as important as good physical health – they go hand in hand – in times of adversity and in times prosperity. This awareness lessens the stigma too often associated with mental illness and seeking mental health support, which has long been a primary reason many people do not reach out when they need help.”

In the second quarter of 2021, many SCDMH patients returned to their community mental health centers for in-person care, 65% vs 24% last year. SCDMH’s direct-to-consumer (DTC) presence has continued to ensure the highest standards of care for its patients and their families receiving telemental health services across all participating platforms.

The Highway to Hope (H2H) Outreach Program is continuing to ramp up. H2H will serve patients at local businesses and community organizations within the Pee Dee (Florence, Darlington, Marion); TriCounty (Chesterfield, Dillon, Marlboro) and Waccamaw (Georgetown, Williamsburg, Horry) Regions. The mobile clinical care team will include an adult Mental Health Professional, Child Mental Health Professional, a Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner. Psychiatric Telehealth services will also be available.

The Emergency Department Telepsychiatry Program began to normalize as well, averaging 815 comprehensive evaluations per month. In the second quarter the program welcomed Pelham Medical Center to the roster of twenty-four (24) participating hospitals.

SCDMH has provided more than 594,000 telehealth services since the inception dates of its various telehealth programs. The Agency has made exceptional progress adapting to the extremely unusual situation that all in South Carolina and the nation are facing, offering mental health resources, crisis resources, and connection to non-SCDMH crisis resources. For more information on these resources please visit our website <https://scdmh.net/>.



South Carolina AHEC Program Office  
Medical University of South Carolina  
1 South Park Circle  
Suite 203  
Charleston, SC 29407

May 7, 2021

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's Office for Telehealth Education in developing and supporting six online telehealth courses and seven additional telehealth programs including Palmetto Care Connection's Webinar Wednesday and SC AHEC developed programming available for free for health professionals and students in South Carolina via the [SC AHEC online learning portal](#).

Telepresenter Certification is currently being updated and will be offered next quarter.

SC AHEC Course Registrations and Course Completers  
(Date range 1/1/2021-3/31/2021)

1. [Telehealth](#) for High School and College Students – 2 Registrations, **2 Completers**
2. [Telepresenter Certification](#) – 21 Registrations, **15 Completers**
3. [Telemental Health](#) – 9 Registrations, **6 Completers**
4. [Billing & Reimbursement Bootcamp](#) - 3 Registrations, **3 Completers**
5. [Foundations of Telehealth](#) – 33 Registrations, **27 Completers**
6. [Telehealth Implementation](#) – 19 Registrations, **12 Completers**

**118 Total Registrations** for all SC AHEC Telehealth Education courses/programs awarded to Participants April 1 – June 30, 2021.



July 14, 2021

South Carolina ETV  
Calendar Year 2021 Quarter 2 Report  
South Carolina Telehealth Alliance

The *My Telehealth* Team continued their robust content delivery at South Carolina ETV creating 6 new patient centered video stories and 5 radio stories in Q2. The video stories were distributed on digital platforms and the SCTA social media channels. The radio stories were distributed through South Carolina Public Radio, reaching all major markets including Charlotte, Augusta, and Savannah airing twice per week of broadcast reaching 1.1M weekly listeners.

List of telehealth features:

**Video**

- Center for homeless offers medical care through unique partnership
- Trouble kicking the habit? Telehealth can help
- Pilot project helps expand broadband access in rural Allendale County
- On demand videos expand Prisma Health's reach
- Breathing easier with continuity of care
- Virtual visits are a lifeline for South Carolina patients

**Radio**

- Remote Monitoring Program Provides Safety Net for COVID-19 Patients
- Virtual Eye Screenings Detect Potential Blindness
- State-Wide Collaborative Unites Rural Communities to Advance Digital Equity
- Virtual Counselling Increase a Success Factor For Tobacco Cessation Patients
- Center For Homeless Connects People to Medical Services

This content continues to enjoy social sharing via television, radio, email newsletters, multiple websites and social media platforms. The SCTA's monthly newsletter held an average open rate of **17.6%** for Q2. The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance Facebook page has **710** followers with video posts performing 2X better than status updates and 4X better than links. On Twitter, the SCTA page has **804** followers, received 4,863 profile visits and 19,095 tweet impressions. Our top Twitter mentions for Q2 came from PCC, MUSC Telehealth, and Telehealth Daily News.

# CENTER FOR RURAL AND PRIMARY HEALTHCARE

*from Evidence to Impact*

## **SCTA CY21 Q2 Report SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare**

### **Telehealth Survey**

In CY21, The SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare built upon the previous work of the SCTA and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health to assess the barriers and facilitators of successful telehealth adoption among smaller rural and primary healthcare practices in South Carolina amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This work also explored the impact of COVID-19 on telehealth utilization patterns. Healthcare providers across the nation have pivoted to offer some services through telephonic or virtual mediums during the pandemic. Fortunately, temporary regulatory and reimbursement changes made it possible for providers to expand telehealth services.

The quantitative data from the survey administered to health centers and practices in South Carolina aimed to answer two research questions: 1) *How has utilization of telehealth among rural health centers, federally qualified health centers, and other outpatient providers in SC changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?*; and 2) *What have been barriers and facilitators (policy, technology, workforce, etc.) to successful adoption of telehealth among these clinics?*

The summary of the results below is a comparison of urban practices and rural practices and are as follows:

- 96% of urban practices indicated that their reason for using telehealth was to increase access for patients during COVID-19. Similarly, 93% of rural practices increased their telehealth services as a response to COVID-19.
- Both urban and rural practices indicated that their top three barriers to telehealth included patient access to technology or connectivity, concerns regarding the evidence about the value of telemedicine, and concerns about patient comfort with technology.
- Available support for telehealth in urban and rural practices is predominantly provided by practice staff or through the health system's IT department that they are owned by.

The Center will further analyze the survey data to focus on patterns based on practice characteristics. This will include but is not limited to practice ownership, specialty, and size. In addition, we have moved to the next phase of this work which involves qualitative interviews with practices and patients to supplement the surveys on how telehealth utilization has evolved since COVID-19.

## **ECHO**

The Center continues to participate in the statewide ECHO collaborative group to ensure that ECHO programming in SC is optimized and reaches rural providers. We will also expand on our supporting role of ECHO to provide insight into rural practices' uptake of the collaborative. Additionally, we continue to provide enhanced support for women's health initiatives led by Dr. Berry Campbell. Sustaining and expanding this work to support access to maternal-fetal medicine and obstetrical care to rural and primary care providers throughout the state is vital in improving maternal and child health.



### Digital Literacy Training

PCC was awarded a Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) grant and additional funding from the S.C. Office on Aging to implement a digital inclusion pilot program for seniors in five counties (Allendale, Barnwell, Clarendon, Richland, and Williamsburg) in South Carolina. In Quarter 2, PCC trained 65 seniors how safely operate digital tablets, compose emails, connect virtually with family and friends, conduct telehealth visits, and more in Allendale, Barnwell, and Richland counties. PCC plans to conduct trainings in the remaining two counties in Quarter 3.

PCC also received a grant from the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control to expand digital inclusion in seven South Carolina counties: Allendale, Bamberg, Williamsburg, Lee, Marlboro, Marion, and Dillon. PCC has hired a Digital Literacy Director that will lead the digital inclusion initiative to provide digital literacy training and devices to 1,000 low-income households.

### Telehealth Symposium

On April 30, 2021, PCC hosted a free virtual Telehealth Regional Symposium in partnership with Lowcountry AHEC and the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance to highlight telehealth programs in the Lowcountry region of South Carolina. Presenters joined from Beaufort Memorial Hospital, SC Hospital Association, SC Office of Rural Health, SC Primary Health Care Association, and the Medical University of South Carolina. Session recordings are available on PCC’s website at [www.palmettocareconnections.org](http://www.palmettocareconnections.org)

### Quarter 2 Webinar Wednesdays

Webinar recordings are available on PCC’s website at [www.palmettocareconnections.org](http://www.palmettocareconnections.org) .

<b>Quarter 2 Webinar Wednesdays</b>
<i>Building Safe Online Spaces</i> <b>April 28, 2021</b>
<i>Best Practices Preventing Suicide Using Telehealth</i> <b>May 26, 2021</b>
<i>Telehealth Research &amp; Reports: Early Findings of Use of Telehealth Amidst a Pandemic</i> <i>*Offered in partnership with SCTA and MUSC*</i> <b>June 30, 2021</b>

### Rural Health Network Development (RHND) Grant New Partner

PCC was awarded a RHND Grant to establish telehealth virtual access centers in rural, independent pharmacies, churches, and a tribal community center. The SC Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) is now a partner of Ehrhardt Pharmacy, one of the virtual access centers. SCDMH will connect with existing patients via telehealth that they were previously connecting with by phone.

### NCHN Award

Palmetto Care Connections was recently awarded the National Cooperative of Health Networks Association’s (NCHN) 2021 Outstanding Health Network award. The award recognizes any network or entire network organization that has improved access to health services in its service area and coordination of resources for network members through innovative, comprehensive approaches.

**Broadband**

By the end of the month of June PCC received commitment from USAC for just over \$5,000,000 for broadband subsidy for South Carolina Healthcare providers over three years, or a little over \$1,600,000 annually. This is on top of just over \$11,000,000 over three years or just over \$3,600,000 annually committed in FY2019. That's a total savings for South Carolina Healthcare providers of over \$16,000,000 between July 1, 2019-June 30, 2023. This subsidy and has allowed many healthcare providers to add redundant circuits to increase uptime and/or re-invest those dollars into healthcare services.