UPCOMING EVENTS:
4.27.22
Education Series Webinar
Interstate licensing for telehealth, coding and billing implications

Public Health Emergency Extension: Updates from HTRC

March 18th 2022- The federal COVID-19 Public Health Emergency was renewed for another 90-day period. Heartland Telehealth Resource Center’s Richelle Marting, JD, MHSA, RHIA says that the extension came a week before the PHE was about to expire. Dr. Marting serves as a registered health information administrator and attorney focusing on healthcare coding. Marting has been monitoring the PHE extension for months now, and how it has affected telehealth flexibilities and implementation during the pandemic.

The current 90-day declaration will continue until

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YOUTUBE: HeartlandTRC
July 15, 2022, unless rescinded sooner. In early 2021 the Biden administration sent a letter to states’ governors expressing an intent to provide 60-days advance notice before a termination or expiration of the Public Health Emergency. The next 30-days, then, will be critical for providers continuing to rely on the telehealth flexibilities of the PHE and those that will be extended under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022.

“Original PHE telehealth flexibilities addressed several restrictive previsions of typical telehealth rules for Medicare to make the services more accessible during the public health emergency as a mechanism to reduce in person contact with the hopes of decreasing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.” Says Dr. Marting, “These flexibilities included covering telehealth services to patients who were located outside of rural areas. Where traditionally, telehealth had been used as a way to improve access to healthcare in these rural areas, during the PHE it was just as important, if not more so, to reduce in person contacts in metropolitan and urban areas where coverage for telehealth is not ordinarily available.”

Should the Biden administration provide notice of an intent to terminate the PHE declaration in July, some telehealth flexibilities will end immediately on that date. Some will continue for 151-days after the day the PHE ends under the provisions of the Consolidation Appropriations Act of 2022. Others would then expire December 31, 2023. See for example, the list of telehealth services’ effective dates.

There is still hope that legislation will solidify telehealth as a means of care within the country. Without legislative intervention though, the original limitations for telehealth would be put back in place. In the meantime, continue to watch for commercial payors’ policies similarly withdrawing telehealth flexibilities to understand what rules are in effect, when, and for which payors as the PHE rules are winding down.

In March, Heartland Telehealth Resource Center conducted their first ever pop-up webinar in response to national telehealth flexibilities being extended beyond the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). Previously, these flexibilities were granted only until the end to the end of the public health emergency. The session was hosted by Richelle Marting, a registered health information administrator and attorney focusing on healthcare coding. View full webinar here.
What's the Latest With Telehealth Unmuted?

Episode 6 features Dr. Whitacre, a professor in the department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University. He has published over 60 peer-reviewed journal articles, with most exploring the relationship between internet access and rural development. He shares why broadband is crucial to quality of life, how to increase digital literacy, and studies on telehealth perceptions. Listen on Spotify and Apple Podcasts!

Episode 7 is our first-ever cross-over episode with Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center’s A Virtual View podcast. Cameron Hilt, Caroline Yoder and Cara Lawlor join together for a very special collaboration, where they share their podcast journeys - from starting, to challenges, to big insights along the way. Listen on Spotify and Apple Podcasts!

Episode 8 features Ben Bingham, Project Director of the Native Connections program. He has worked for the Eastern Shawnee tribe for the last twelve years. He shares his career journey, insights into tribal culture, and the importance of mental health for adolescents. Listen on Spotify and Apple Podcasts!

Episode 9 features Stephen Njenga, the Director of Quality Measurement and Population Health Improvement at the Missouri Hospital Association. Stephen coordinated the quality, population health and innovative model areas of the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (FLEX). He was a national recipient of the 2018 MBQIP Spirit Award for Innovation and Collaboration in the FLEX program. Listen on Spotify and Apple Podcasts!

Check out our full list of episodes on Spotify and Apple Podcasts!

Updates and Opportunities

HTRC’s Education Series

HTRC is proud to present our Education Series, a webinar series centered on important telehealth topics. Health care providers in KS, MO, or OK: this series is for YOU!
SAVE THE DATE for these upcoming webinars:

**APRIL 27 | 12 –1 PM CST**

Interstate licensing for telehealth, coding and billing implications

Guest speaker, attorney Diane Bellquist, former counsel for the Kansas Board of Healing Arts, will join the session to discuss interstate licensing rules affecting the delivery of telehealth. Richelle Marting will join the discussion to address how interstate licensing impacts coding and billing of telehealth services across state lines.

### HRSA Telehealth Learning Series

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) invites you to a webinar on **Telementoring & Training for the Health Workforce**.

**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022

**Time:** 3:00pm – 4:00pm ET | 2:00 – 3:00pm CT | 12:00 – 1:00pm PT

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain and describe the Community Health Workers-Opioid Use Disorder (CHW-OUD) Project ECHO Program
- Discuss the best practices, findings, and results from the CHW-OUD Project ECHO Program
- Describe how Oklahoma Dementia Care Network (OkDCN) is using Project ECHO to train nursing homes in age-friendly and dementia-friendly care
- Describe barriers and facilitators to success in using the Age-Friendly Nursing Home Project ECHO
- Describe the community-based asynchronous tele-dentistry pilot at New York University College of Dentistry

Registration is available here

### Sign up for HRSA eNews!

HRSA eNews is a free, twice-monthly publication that provides updates on HRSA’s programs, funding opportunities, events, and other timely information. Subscription includes updates on grant opportunities, rural health, telehealth, and any information you are interested in.

Subscribe here

### Telemedicine ECHOs

**Missouri Telehealth Network Telemedicine ECHO**

The Heartland Telehealth Resource Center and Missouri Telehealth Network are offering a Telemedicine ECHO for organizations in Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. Participants will learn how to leverage their current telehealth program into a permanent solution for patients. Or, if they’re new to telehealth, they’ll learn best practices for building your program. This nine-month ECHO will be held the second Tuesday of each month from 9 to 10 a.m. via online learning sessions.
To register online, click HERE and Select “Telemedicine” as the ECHO!

COVID-19 ECHOs

Missouri Telehealth Network COVID-19 ECHO will meet via Zoom video conferencing every Monday from noon to 1 p.m. Anyone interested in learning how to protect, diagnose and treat Missouri patients with COVID-19, as well as how to protect their overall community, are encouraged to join. A multidisciplinary expert team led by Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Director Randall Williams, MD, will share the latest developments, answer questions, and discuss management of patient cases presented by participants. Register and learn more here.

COVID-19 Resources

You can access the resources, here. Please share with others who could benefit from the information. We will continue to add and update resources as they come available.

Connect with us!

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