UPCOMING EVENTS:

3.30.22
Education Series Webinar
Long Term Care service delivery & billing

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

4.20.22
Education Series Webinar
Guardian responsibilities & issues surrounding consent, privacy, service delivery & billing in the telehealth context across the lifespan

HTRC Telehealth Pop-up Covers
Importance of Telehealth Flexibility Extension

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, JD, MHSA, RHIA. Dr. Marting serves as a registered health information administrator and attorney focusing on healthcare coding.

“Original PHE telehealth flexibilities addressed several restrictive provisions 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.”

The recent omnibus bill passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate extend telehealth flexibilities offered through the PHE to 151 days after the PHE ends. The PHE has been extended several times in 90-day increments, with the current end date seen as April 16th. However, there is an expectation that the order will be extended again, making July 15th another potential end date. If the PHE were to end in April, this would mean telehealth flexibilities would end in September. If the PHE ends in July, the flexibilities would stay in place until the end of the year in December.

“Optimistically, I’d also say it has the potential to give Congress or DHHS time to promulgate legislation or regulations on various telehealth rules making those flexibilities permanent telehealth reimbursement policy.” Says Dr. Marting.

If there is not legislation to make these flexibilities permanent, telehealth could go back to being more heavily restricted in how it is practiced and paid for. The flexibilities have allowed for more access for users of telehealth as well as an expanded list of site practitioners. Under current guidelines, the definition of distant site practitioners to include occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language pathologists, and audiologists. It also expanded the definition of telehealth to include audio only, and allowed for expanded distant sites to provide the ability to reach appointments without travel.

“We have been able to gather data on utilization and efficacy [of telehealth].” Says Dr. Marting, “And now, there is congressional support to continue on the trajectory of telehealth technologies. This legislation shows the interest in building out these telehealth flexibilities as potentially permanent policies. Stakeholders with data or interests in furthering telehealth policy should continue to communicate with their representatives and...
If you missed this session or would like a recap, you can watch the recording or view the presentation.

**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!
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!

Register [HERE](#).

SAVE THE DATE for these upcoming webinars:

**MARCH 30 | 12 –1 PM CST**

**Long Term Care service delivery & billing**

This session will cover the role of telehealth in the long-term care setting, with a particular focus on skilled nursing facilities. Use of and billing for telehealth for physician visits and therapy services will be discussed.

**APRIL 20 | 12 –1 PM CST**

**Guardian responsibilities & issues surrounding consent, privacy, service delivery & billing in the telehealth context across the lifespan**

Consent and privacy are still necessary, yet sometimes overlooked, aspects of healthcare delivery in a telehealth format. This session will discuss topics of consent, including issues surrounding parental or guardian consent for minors, consent related to incompetent adults, and durable powers of attorney. The question of who can consent for services closely relates to the privacy of information surrounding a service, and the HIPAA and more recent information blocking rules will be discussed in light of consent for delivery.

**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.

**Complete Survey for Chance to Win Amazon Gift Card!**

Every two years Telehealth Technology Assessment Center sends out their Telehealth Technology Survey. This [survey](#) asks a variety of questions around the types of technologies, roles, and future planning of organizations and individuals that use telehealth technology.

They use this data to:
• Identify technologies of interest for future evaluations, toolkits, video series and other resources
• Understand trends that are affecting the telehealth landscape by region and nationwide
• Determine how TTAC can better engage with you!

The survey takes less than 10 minutes, and by completing it and providing your email address they will enter you into their drawing for one of **10 Amazon gift cards**. Survey closes **March 31, 2022** so be sure to get your response in today!

---

**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.