



Panel Presentation: State and Federal Policy

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Image from Artists at the Arc of the Capital Area, TX DIGS Recipients



*COVID-19 pandemic has
forever changed the
human experience*

Devastating impact of COVID-19 on people with ID/DD and their families

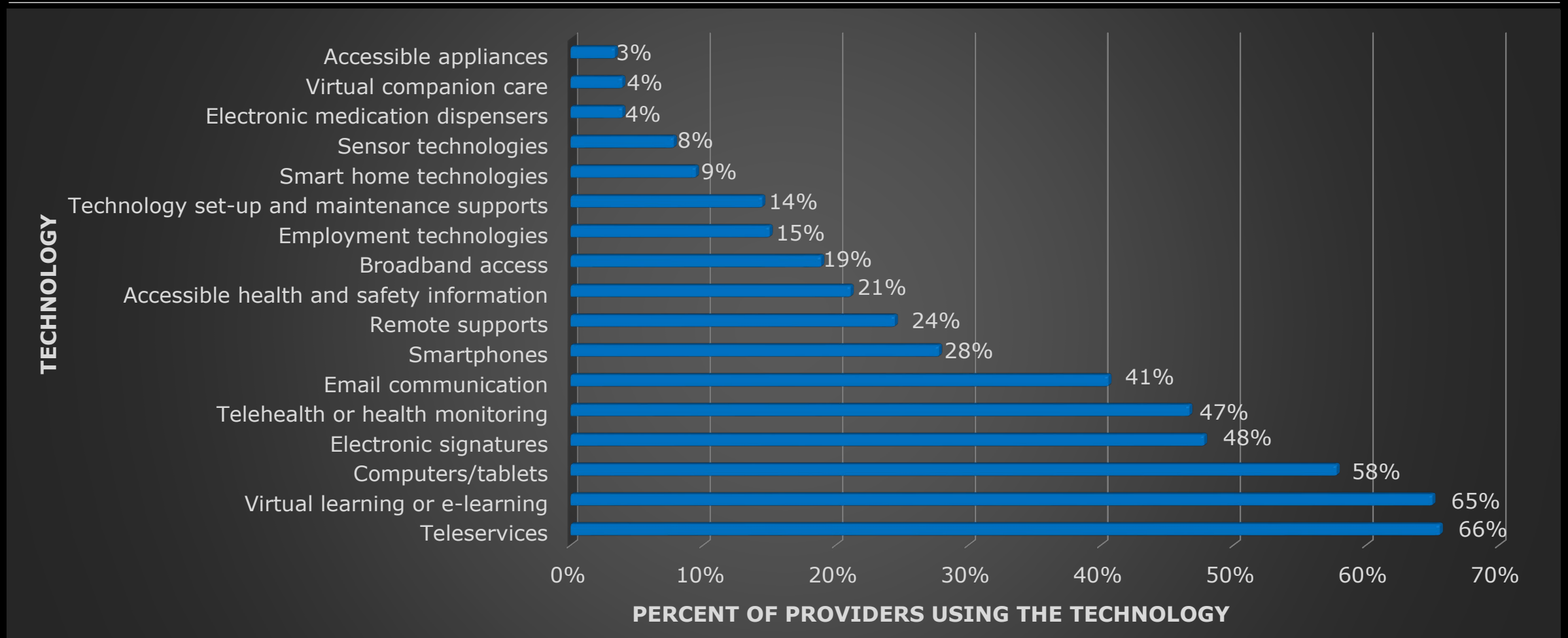
- “Having an intellectual disability was the strongest independent risk factor for presenting with a COVID-19 diagnosis and the strongest independent risk factor other than age for COVID-19 mortality.”
Gleason et al., 2021
- Mortality rates due to COVID were 3-8 times more than the general population and impacted younger adults ages 55-65.
- Other risk factors, congregate settings, lack of access to information, comorbidities, dependency on personal care, and generalized health inequities

Flexibilities through Appendix K

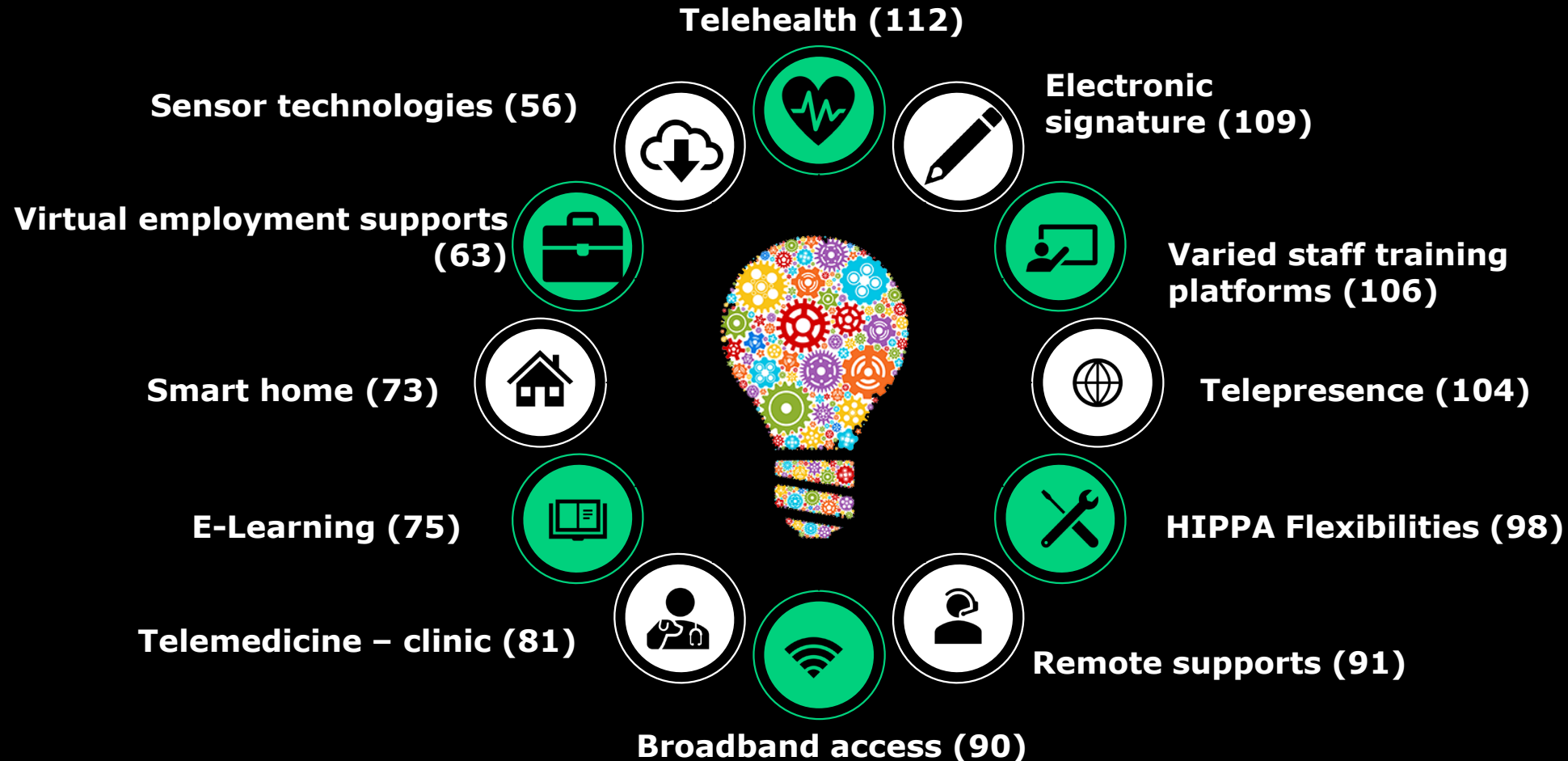
Appendix K: Emergency Preparedness and Response and COVID-19 Addendum

“Includes actions that states can take under the existing 1915(c) home and community-based waiver authority in order to respond to an emergency”

Technology investments throughout the pandemic



What technology solutions do providers want to maintain post-COVID?










Pandemic demonstrated tangible and devastating inequities to technology and information access



Access barriers through digital transformation accelerated by COVID

-  Telehealth, telemedicine, and teleservices
-  Remote supports and digital services
-  Remote employment and use of accessible technology
-  Civic engagement
-  Social and community connections



Technology First Policy and Practice

Technology First definition



Technology First began as a movement but has transformed to a “framework for systems change where technology is considered first in the discussion of support options available to individuals and families through person-centered approaches to promote meaningful participation, social inclusion, self-determination and quality of life” (Tanis, 2019)

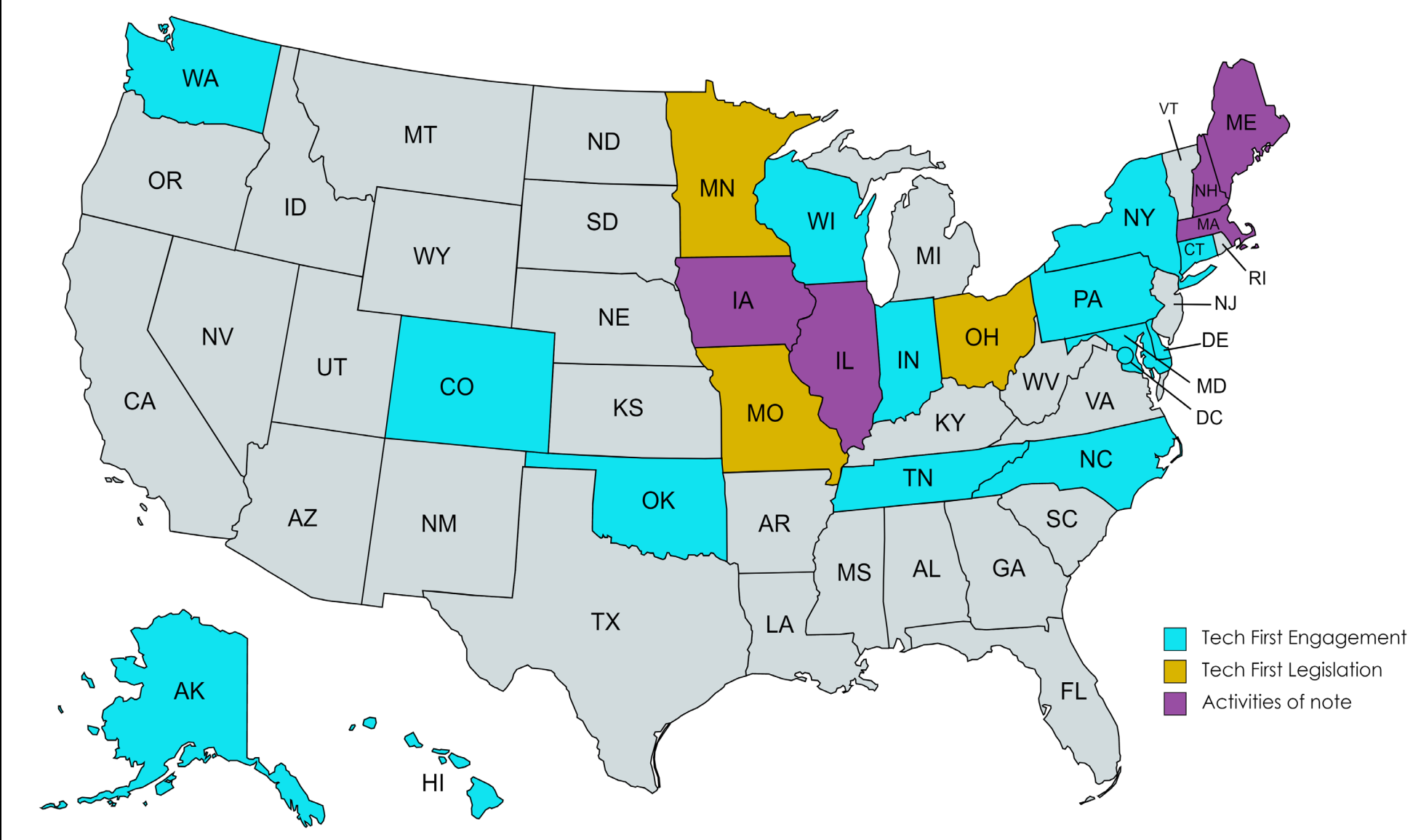
Why Technology First?

Technology First solves the most pressing challenges of our field today

1. Promote autonomy, self-direction, and community engagement
2. Address the direct care workforce shortages
3. Drives more efficient and effective practices –cost efficiencies



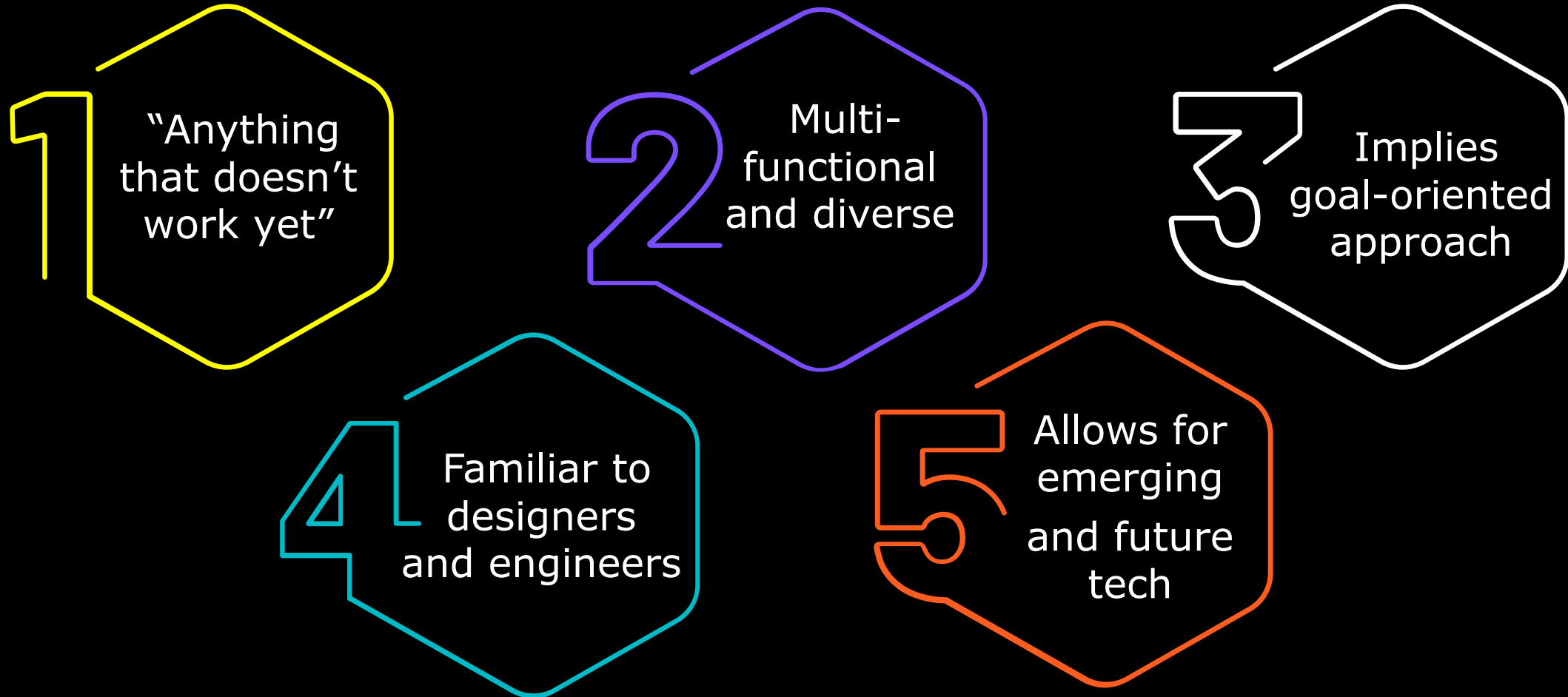
States with Technology First initiatives or activities



Elements of Technology First initiatives

- Set of core values
- Implementation team
- Resource allocation
- Communication
- Disruption in the status quo through innovation
- Leverage through collaborations
- Capacity building
- Fidelity and data driven decision-making
- Consistent terminology

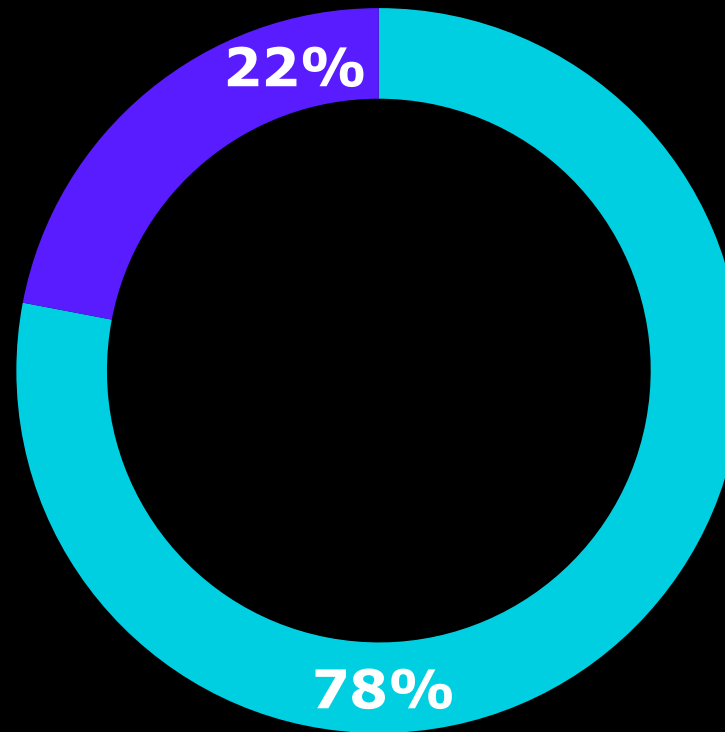
"Technology solutions"



Advancement of Technology First

78% of the responding states were interested in advancing Technology First

There needs to be clarity around what states are doing and defined outcomes



American Rescue Plan Act enhanced funding for home and community-based services

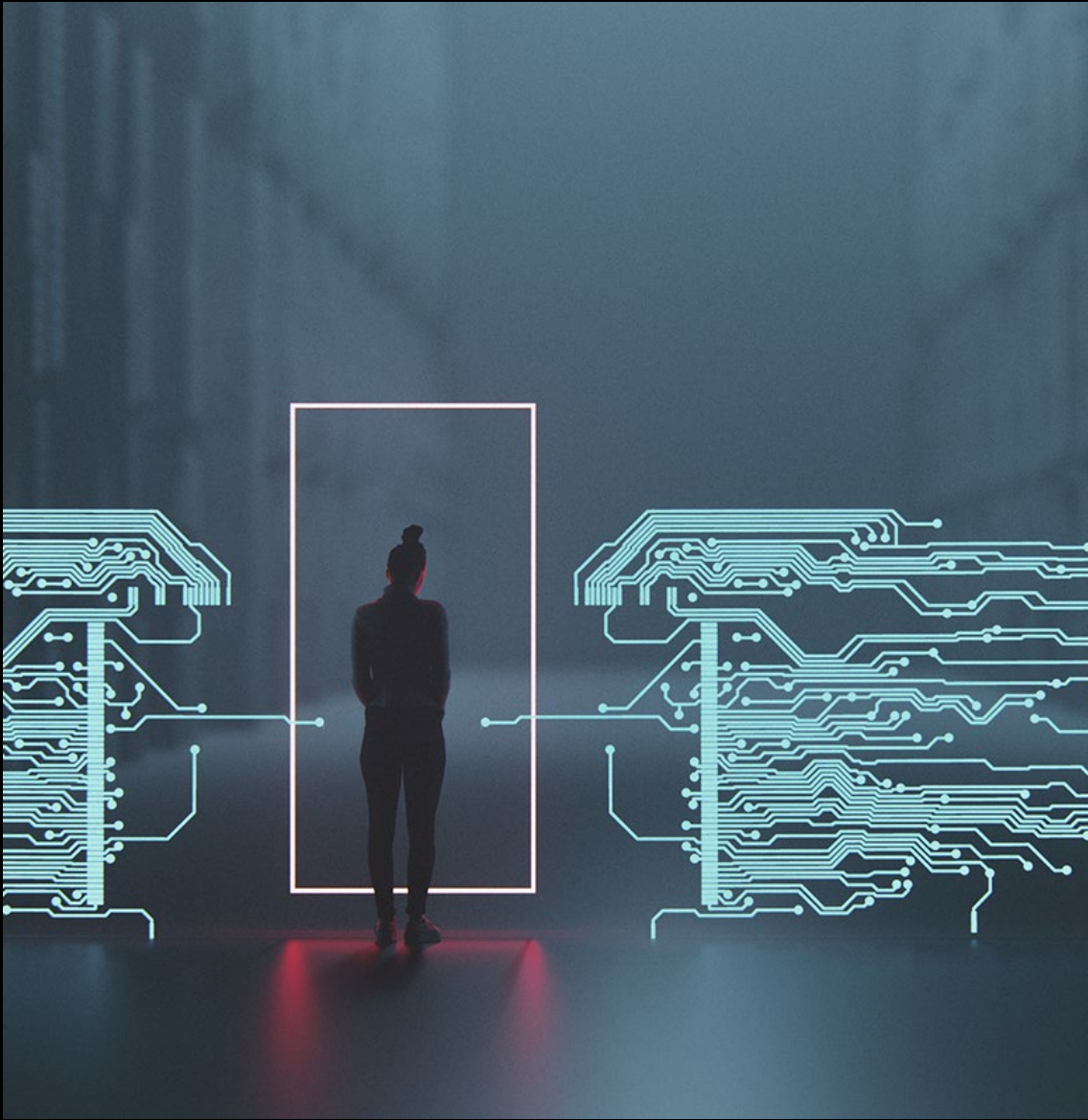
- Funds to “enhance, expand, or strengthen HCBS”
- Act provided a total of \$1.9 trillion in economic stimulus
- 49 states have invested in technology solutions in their ARPA plans
 - 2 states specifically call out Technology First
 - Categories of investments include telehealth, purchasing devices, remote supports, case management, virtual services, and data management

ARPA impact and evaluation of technology solutions

- Quality of life outcomes
- Technology agility, resiliency, and literacy
- Staff impact
- Return on investment
- Accessibility of technology solutions
- Etc.



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"Without technology that promotes access, connectivity and community participation, people with ID may not access services in the community like people without disability. This could lead to loneliness, and dependence on care provided in devolved institutions."
Owuor et.al, 2018

Thank you.

Contact Information

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