

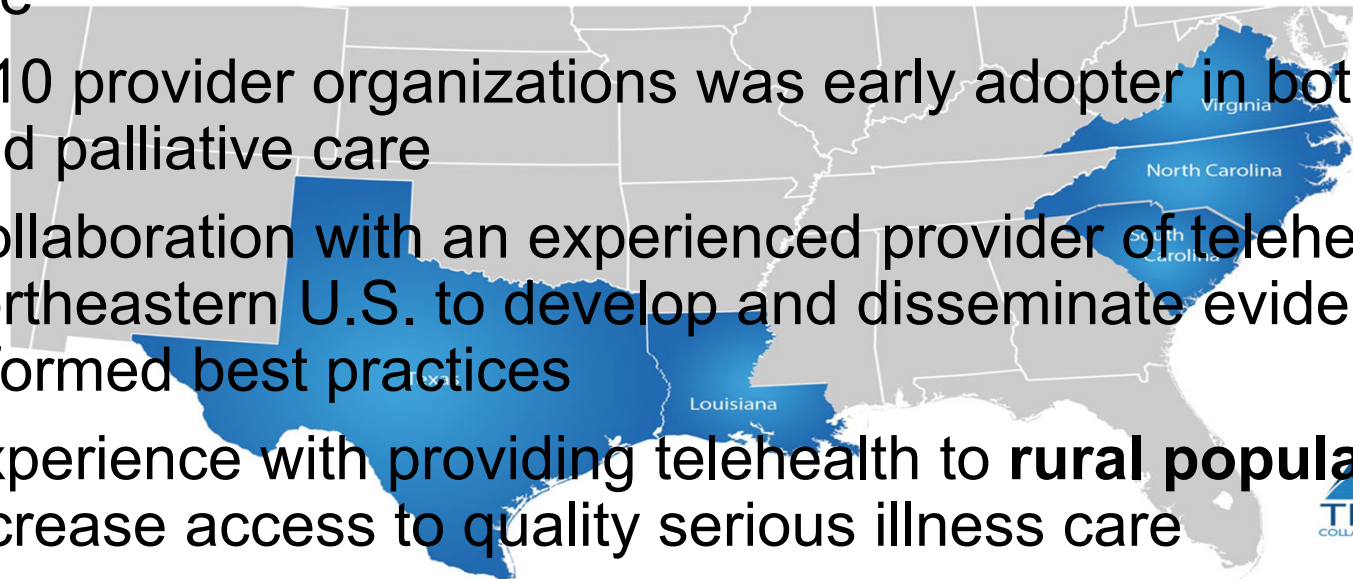
# Caring for the seriously ill: Telehealth use during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond



**Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned**

# Organizational Context

- 10 provider network, limited provider experience with telehealth use
- 1/10 provider organizations was early adopter in both hospice and palliative care
- Collaboration with an experienced provider of telehealth in the northeastern U.S. to develop and disseminate evidence-informed best practices
- Experience with providing telehealth to **rural populations** to increase access to quality serious illness care

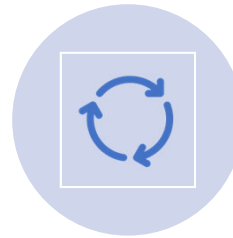


## TELEHEALTH 101:

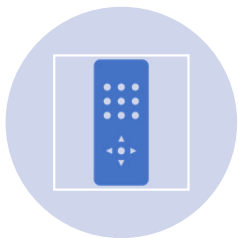
# Services provided by Telehealth



Live videoconferencing  
(synchronous)



Store and forward  
(asynchronous)



Remote patient  
monitoring (RPM)



Mobile health  
(mHealth)

# Challenges AND Opportunities

## RAPID ACCELERATION AND ADOPTION OF TELEHEALTH DURING THE COVID-19 PHE

Patient and families wishing to avoid contact (fear of transmission, fear of transmitting, i.e. PUI for COVID-19)	Rapid adoption of mobile health apps that allow for providing a <b>broad scope of telehealth services</b>
Facility limits hospice team in-person visits	Creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Window visits</li><li>▪ Equipment deployment</li><li>▪ Virtual rounding</li></ul>
Staff fears of transmission	Increased openness to telehealth
Lack of experience with delivering care using telehealth	Leverage existing partnerships and the experience of early adopters
Lack of adequate broadband internet service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop best practices and decision-making tools for all types of visits</li><li>• <b>Use of mobile health app that supports broad scope of telehealth practice</b></li></ul>

# TapCloud



- HIPAA secure texting, live synchronous videoconferencing, store and forward, and remote patient monitoring
- Symptom monitoring and tracking
- Informed by machine learning (dx, meds)
- Device agnostic
- Syncs with biometric devices
- Populates to a Clinician dashboard

# Lessons Learned

- The selection of a telehealth platform should be guided by short and long-term goals
- Faster, smoother adoption from providers with ANY experience
- Clinical team resistance and inadequate access to broadband internet were the most significant barriers but can be overcome **⊘ SUBSTITUTE FOR IN-PERSON VISITS**
- Most frequent uses/most frequent users
- Staff Training
  - Develop evidence-informed best practices and visit standards
  - Employ a Superuser Model
  - Incorporate training into clinical orientation programs
  - Disseminate training through existing Learning Management Systems
- Patient/Family Caregiver Training
  - Individualized, customized, administrative support

# Outcomes and Future Challenges



- Improved Symptom Management
- Patients, caregivers, and providers reported positive experiences
  - Access to clinicians
  - Quick responses
  - Improved efficiency and quality of care

Will continue to use telehealth beyond the COVID-19 pandemic



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## Highest 'top-box' Hospice CAHPS scores

- HOSPICE TEAM COMMUNICATIONS
- GETTING HELP WITH SYMPTOMS
- **TRAINING FAMILY TO CARE FOR PATIENT\*\***
- TREATING FAMILY WITH RESPECT

- Sustainability and Scalability
- Possible Future uses
- Effective Implementation and Change Management Strategies