

# Wyoming Telehealth Consortium

January 30, 2018

3:00pm – 4:15pm

## Attendees:

- \* Dr. John Bush, MD, Medicaid Director, Telehealth Consortium Chair
- \* Dr. Christopher Roark, CU School of Medicine
- \* Brenda Burnett – Clinical Quality Director , Wyoming Primary Care Association (WYPCA)
- \* Shannon Christiansen – Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center (NRTRC)
- \* Christina Taylor, Program Manager, Maternal & Child Health Unit, WDH
- \* Morris McGaugh, Provider Services Director, Optum Health (WYhealth)
- \* Brandi Wahlen, Mountain-Pacific Quality Health (MPQH)
- \* Patricia Bacon, Certification Program Manager, Behavioral Health Division (BHD)
- \* Ruth Jo Friess, HIT Manager, WDH
- \* Andrea Bailey, HIT Outreach Coordinator, WDH
- \* Sharla Allen, Manager, Office of Rural Health, Wyoming Department of Health (WDH)
- \* Kevin Smith, Telehealth Coordinator, Cheyenne Regional Medical Center (CRMC)
- \* Ray Brand
- \* Kevin Bohnenblust, Executive Director, Wyoming Board of Medicine
- \* Tim Caswell, EHR Program Specialist, Healthcare Financing, WDH
- \* Dr. Behringer – Medical Director, WyHealth
- \* Emily Genoff, Business Development Director, Wyoming Behavioral Institute (WBI)
- \* Michelle Chulik – CEO, Wyoming Medical Center
- \* Deb LaMarche – Program Director, Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center
- \* Debbie Voyles (**Leaving in February; Interim is David Koffman**, Debbie will send his contact information)
- \* Corey Jenkins, Project Coordinator Senior, Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND)
- \* Morgan Melton, Project Coordinator Assistant, Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND)

## AGENDA ITEMS

### Webinars – Corey Jenkins

- \* Every last Wednesday of the month.
- \* Next is Wed. Jan 31. Dr. Friedman will be talking about Sleep Apnea, Home sleep testing, and Compliance Monitoring.
- \* Feb. 28, NRTRC will present on the telehealth resource centers.

## Teleneurosurgery Consultations at CU – Dr. Roark

- \* Came to the University of Colorado 2 years ago.
- \* Saw many patients in Detroit who were driving 6 to 8 hours just to hear that they did not need treatment. He saw the same sorts of issues in Colorado. There were many referrals from Wyoming, Montana, etc.
- \* Televisits are starting to be implemented for 'incidental' referrals, where clients drive to Associates in Family Medicine and then attend a telehealth visit from the AFM office.
  - o This allows patients to stay closer to home for almost everything besides physical surgery.
  - o Decreases financial hardship on patients – Reduces expenses for food, hotels, driving, parking.
- \* There is an affiliated clinic in Cheyenne, WY. They are interested in expanding this telehealth practice in Wyoming.
- \* Dr. Bush has been very interested in promoting telehealth consultations with the University of Colorado.
  - o Medicaid will pay for home-based visits the same as if the patient was seen in person.
  - o For the "super-specialist," Medicaid allows a small number of consultations and visits.
- \* There is much interest in getting more providers licensed in Wyoming.
- \* The University of Utah just completed an agreement for Tele-ICU with Evanston.
- \* Might be beneficial for providers to do episodic consults (as opposed to being fully licensed in a different state), or work through an expedited provisional license.
  - o Might want to put these procedures in writing for potential providers
  - o To clarify, providers do not need a separate license to practice over telehealth. More information is available on the Telehealth webpage
- \* The HEI can make the process easier for clients to enter their medical records, communicate with their practitioner, etc.

## Medicaid Coverage for Family Counseling – Dr. Bush

- \* As long as the provider is enrolled as a Wyoming Medicaid provider, and the individual wishes to bring in a family member or two to their individual counseling, Medicaid will cover it.
  - o Group counseling will not be covered.
  - o The office of provider services is still wary of providing coverage for Telehealth group counseling. There have been providers who have been trying to take advantage of group therapy, so tightening of rules and regulations is currently taking place.

## Genetics Clinic Update – Christina Taylor

- \* The genetics clinic traditionally offered about 20 in-person genetics clinics throughout the year
  - o They are looking to trim down this model in the interest of refining referral criteria
  - o And reducing the cost burden of the genetics program.
- \* They just executed a contract with the University of Utah to hold 6 in-person clinics and 8 follow-up clinic via Telehealth – these follow-ups will be mostly discussion based.
- \* There are no genetic counselors within the state of Wyoming.
- \* Genetics clinic is working with WIND to develop a training program for Wyoming's public health nurses, to health the nurses facilitate the follow-up visit.
  - o Still working with Utah provider to determine clinical schedule.
  - o Cost per client will decrease by approximately 75%.
  - o Piloting this in two communities for the first two years.

## WIC Update - Sharla Allen

- \* Clients who have access to a lactation specialists breast feed much more and for longer than those who do not.
  - o Want to expand access to lactation specialists for Wyoming patients.

## Child Development Centers Update - Sharla Allen

- \* The current clinics have a few specialists (such a physical therapists and speech-language pathologists), but these specialists have to frequently travel between clinics.
- \* Spoken with the Wyoming Child Development Association to expand telehealth resources
- \* Wyoming Child and Family Development has centers in 7 counties; several staff have requested and received Zoom licenses.

## USAC Update - Sharla Allen

- \* Universal Services Administration Company – a tariff that each person pays on their phone bill funds this program.
- \* 400 million dollars earmarked for rural healthcare facilities to receive subsidies on qualifying costs, such as broadband and hardware.
  - o Public Health Nursing sites qualify for these subsidies.
  - o By getting subsidies, these sites should be seeing a 50% decrease in costs.
- \* The FCC is looking to increase this Healthcare Fund in the future.

## Telehealth Survey – Corey Jenkins

- \* Created a needs assessment survey to see the perceptions of telehealth in the state of Wyoming.

- Went to providers and administrators in Wyoming.
- \* Sara Zlatkovic is currently out on maternity leave, so we currently cannot compile the data.

### Telehealth Stats – Corey Jenkins

- \* There were 20 new users who registered in the last week, which have to be added to ZOOM, which makes around 35 new users for the month of January.
- \* 325 meetings, with over 1,400 participants were held in January, which is an increase from December.
- \* Telehealth services are growing quite a bit in Wyoming.
- \* The Department of Health has a contract with WIND.
  - The Department of Health is interested in how this money is being used – primary focus is on clinical information.
  - WIND should be able to provide data on what percentage of use is clinical use.

### Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center – Deb LaMarche

- \* This fall, NRTRC is moving to a new location based in the University of Utah.
- \* New team – Marla Cissorini (?), Anna Maria Lopez, Marla Peterson
- \* Has an advisory board with representatives from Alaska, Wyoming, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Utah.
- \* Purpose of NRTRC is to help facilitate telehealth systems for rural communities. Part of 12 regional and 2 national groups of TRCs.
  - One goal is to develop relationships with the various Telehealth Consortia to see how the NRTRC can help advance the Consortia Agendas.
- \* NRTRC will host a webinar at the end of the month.
  - In-depth overview of TRCs.
- \* Will try to schedule a site visit in Wyoming to spend time getting to know the telehealth community in the region.
- \* NRTRC holds an annual conference. Next is in September, specific dates to be announced soon. They will be soliciting ideas and proposals for presentations.

### Broadband / Internet Challenges – Ray Brand

- \* Please reach out to Ray with any internet issues / broadband issues that you encounter.
- \* Typical issues include: Lack of bandwidth, unreliable bandwidth; cost;
- \* There are some concerns about the lines between internet providers providing services vs. when the government needs to provide services.

### HIE – Health Information Exchange – Ruth Jo Friess

- \* State funding was provided to create a federal and state-funded Health Information Exchange (HIE). The HIE project is named the Wyoming Frontier Information (WYFI).

- \* 13 vendors submitted proposals, Medicaid contract was awarded to Medicity incorporated. Contract began in December 2017.
  - o Infrastructure is now being built.
  - o Have provider outreach committee, technical and sustainability committee, and others that meet monthly.
- \* Are currently in beginning phases of implementation.
- \* Reach out to Andrea Bailey or Ruth Jo Friess to become a member of a subcommittee.  
[Andrea.bailey@wyo.gov](mailto:Andrea.bailey@wyo.gov)  
[Ruth.jo.friess@wyo.gov](mailto:Ruth.jo.friess@wyo.gov)
- \* WYFI Website Link:  
[https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/wyoming\\_frontier\\_information\\_wyfi/](https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/wyoming_frontier_information_wyfi/)

### **Other Discussion**

- \* Patricia is working on a project that tracks community mental health and substance use treatment centers usage of telehealth services.
  - o Gathering baseline information.
  - o Also gathering information from Medicaid about funded community mental health and substance use treatment centers about use of telehealth, billing for telehealth.