

San Antonio and Greater Bexar County Community Digital Equity Plan and Roadmap

Population Segments: Telehealth

August 2021

Disclaimer:

The information found in this portal is intended for public use. It reflects work produced and provided by the SA Digital Connects team and community members starting in January 2021 to the present.

Some information will reflect the moment in time when the work was done. Data, funding, maps and assumptions may fluctuate in the everchanging digital ecosystem.

Initiative Details

Population Segments

Closing the Digital Divide | Telehealth

Challenges

- **34 million** Americans lack access to fixed broadband at speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) for downloads and 3 Mbps for uploads
- **22%** of Americans in rural areas and **28%** of Americans in tribal lands lack broadband coverage—as opposed to **1.5%** of Americans in urban
- People with **communication-related disabilities** may not be able to use video-based, remote services, leading to some telehealth initiatives reinforce rather than narrow the digital divide

Organizations already involved

La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE): Health on Wheels (HoW) program along South Texas border meant to broaden access to health care in low-resource communities

Methodist Healthcare Ministries: developed the Turning Point pilot program for diabetic patients that uses a smartphone digital app to monitor diabetes progress and offer real-time support

Solutions



Understand how the digital divide manifests in community

- Perform a simple digital needs assessment to screen for digital access and literacy during patient intake as well as collect patient demographic information



Make telehealth offerings accessible to vulnerable patients

- Offer phone / virtual visits outside of traditional working hours to increase access for essential workers and patients who lack access to video technology



Connect patients with the technology necessary for virtual visits

- Share low-cost broadband options in area with patients (e.g., Lifeline, Internet Essentials, etc.)
- Help connect patients who struggle to use manual technology with adaptive alternatives (e.g., assistive keyboards or mouse alternatives)



Build patients' digital literacy

- Partner with local community organizations, such as public libraries and community centers, to offer digital literacy courses



Raise community awareness of telehealth offerings

- Market the availability of telehealth options across multiple communication channels that will reach vulnerable patients



Thank You