

Technology is Here to Stay – How It Can Enhance the Behavioral Health Workforce

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December 19, 2023



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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use, and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

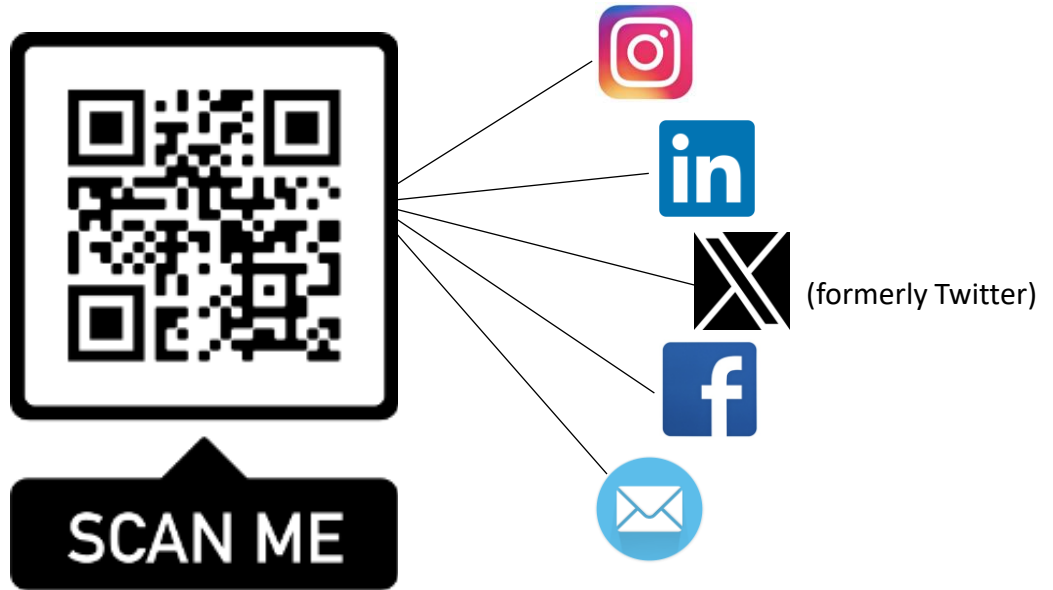
NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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Presented by: Dr. Ashley Fortier

December 19, 2023

Meet the Speaker



Ashley Fortier, PsyD, PSY-C

WICHE-Behavioral Health Program
Technical Assistance Lead



Learning Objectives

1. Describe the history of and current trends in telemental health.
2. Explain how to reduce barriers and increase access to care.
3. Describe factors that promote effective telemental health service delivery.
4. Discuss ethical and legal considerations unique to telemental health.

A Brief History of Telemental Health

- Early 1950's: Videoconferencing in psychiatry
- 1959: Videoconferencing in group therapy, long-term therapy, consultation, and training to medical students
 - Teleconferencing with a two-way closed-circuit microwave technology that allowed dialogue between different sites (began in Nebraska)
 - Further developed during 1960's & 70's in NE, MA and AZ
- 1993: American Telemedicine Association was formed
- 2009: ARRA passed, and HITECH allocated \$25B to health care information technology + digital connectivity.
- 2010: CMS provides guidance on electronic health records and patient privacy.
- 2016: HRSA received money to expand the use of telehealth specifically in rural areas.
- 2020: HRSA identifies MUAs and MUPs) for targeted funding opportunities.

(Caudill & Shore, 2019; Doarn, 2018; Von Dafften, 2020)

Benefits of Telemental Health

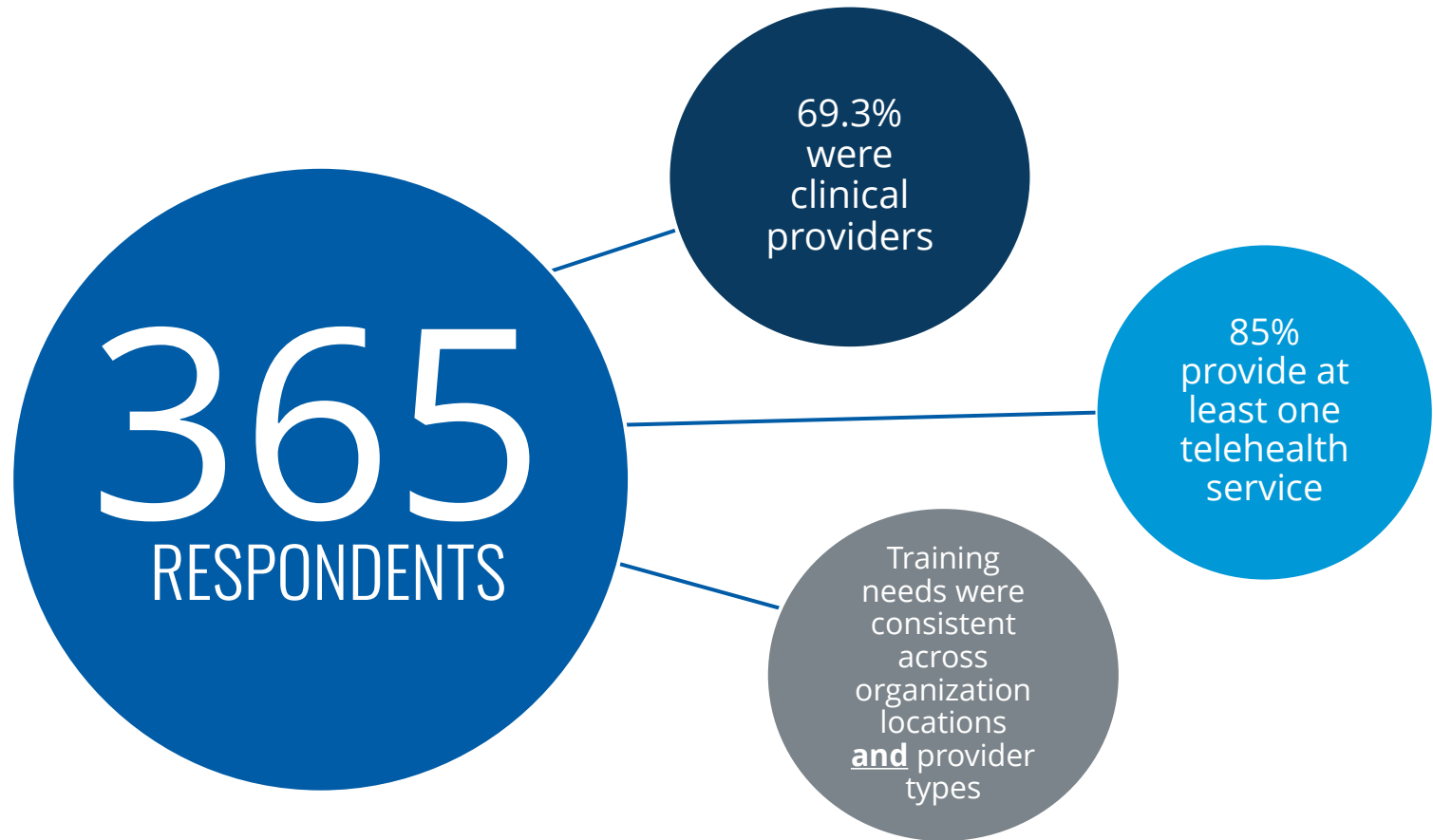
Improved Access to
Services

Comparable Quality of
Care to In-Person Services
*with adequate training

Reduced Service Costs
and Enhanced Profits

(Langarizadeh et al., 2017)

MHTTC Research Overview



Research Trend: Why Organizations Don't Use Telehealth



How to
Effectively
Use
Technology

Ethical
and Legal
Concerns

Reimbursement
and
Documentation

Lack
of Technology
among Client
Population

(Cortelyou-Ward et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2018; Molfenter et al., 2021; Montoya et al., 2022; Perry et al., 2020; Spagnolo et al., 2022; Malliaras et al., 2021; Sugarman et al., 2021; Terry & Buntoro, 2021)

Research Trend: Workforce Training Needs



Administrative
Issues
(e.g., billing,
documentation)

Integrating
Telehealth with
Existing
Systems

Effective Use
with Specific
Populations
(esp. children)

Methods to
Increase
Access to
Technology for
Clients

How to Reduce Barriers and Increase Access

Improve Access to
Broadband

Enhance Digital Literacy for
Staff and Clients

Train Clinicians in
Telehealth Delivery and
Engagement

(Langarizadeh et al., 2017)

Telehealth Terminology Basics

▶ Related to Services

- Asynchronous communication
- Synchronous communication
- Distant Site
- Originating Site
- EHR, PHI, HIPAA
- Interactive Video
- Managed Service Provider
- Picture-in-Picture (PIP)

▶ Related to Technology

- Authentication
- Bandwidth
- Broadband
- Cloud
- Encryption
- Firewall
- Malware
- Webcam

Risks in Telemental Health

Unique ethical, legal and regulatory considerations

Costs of online services and platforms, and equipment
(start-up + recurring costs; Broadband)

Under-Trained Workforce

(Langarizadeh et al., 2017)

Telehealth Care Considerations: Client Engagement



Video Etiquette

Body Language

Environmental
Distractions

Technology
Competence of
Clinician

Telehealth Care Considerations: Reimbursement




Service Coding &
Coverage

State Regulations

Insurance
Credentialing

Post-COVID
Changes

Telehealth Care Considerations: Ethics & Confidentiality



Informed
Consent

Computer
Security

Client
Goodness-of-
Fit for Services

Risk
Assessment
Processes

Helpful Resources

- American Telemedicine Association

<https://www.americantelemed.org/>

- Office for Advancement of Telehealth (OAT) - grant opportunities for rural clinics

<https://www.hrsa.gov/telehealth>

- Telehealth.HHS.gov

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/telehealth-policy/policy-changes-after-the-covid-19-public-health-emergency>

(August 2023)

- National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers

<https://telehealthresourcecenter.org>

- Rural Broadband funding opportunities:

- [Universal Service Fund](#) and [Connect America Fund](#) (through the FCC)
- [Broadband Grant Program](#) and [Community Connect Program](#) (through the USDA)

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Thank you!

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Thank You for Joining Us!

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Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

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