Telehealth and COVID-19
Implications for HIV Care & Treatment
TeleHealthHIV Launches

HealthHIV.org/TeleHealthHIV
TeleHealthHIV CBA Content Areas

- Organizational assessment of capacity and readiness for telehealth
- Funding a telehealth program for long-term sustainability
- Reimbursement opportunities and payment barriers
- Hardware, software and opportunities for community partnerships
- Telehealth models that work best with the agency (direct-to-consumer vs. presenting site)
- Workflows, policies and procedures for new or existing telehealth programs
- Internal trainings for staff to adopt telehealth workflows and systems
- Client education materials tailored to the telehealth services
Introductions - HealthHIV

Michael Shankle
Senior Director of Capacity Building

Anna Clayton
Capacity Building Manager
Introductions - Speakers

Michael Murphree
Chief Executive Officer
Medical Advocacy and Outreach
Montgomery, AL

Reetu Grewal, MD
Medical Director
UF Health Family Medicine & Pediatrics
Baymeadows
Jacksonville, FL
Learning Objectives

By the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Identify changes to telehealth policy and reimbursement as responses to COVID-19
- Identify applications of telehealth to HIV care and treatment
- Describe options for implementing telehealth for HIV care during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

Submit questions through the Q&A chat box. Questions will be facilitated at the end of the webinar.

TeleHealthHIV
Telehealth - A Brief Review

A modality for delivering health care services and public health via information and communication technologies

**Applications**
- Diagnosis
- Consultation
- Treatment
- Education
- Care management
- Self-management

**Benefits**
- Access to HIV prevention and care services
- Client engagement
- Patient/provider relationship
Telehealth & COVID-19

Policy Developments & Expansion
Telehealth & COVID-19: Medicare

**Former Medicare Policy for Telehealth**
- Rural areas
- Specified medical locations
- Virtual check-ins/e-visits
- Specific services

**COVID-19 Response**
- More healthcare services
- More locations (including client’s home)
- Reimbursement parity
- Option to reduce/waive cost-sharing

*Purpose: keep clients at home; save space in healthcare settings; prevent exposures*

Telehealth & COVID-19: HIPAA

**Former HIPAA Policy for Telehealth**

- Covered entities must follow HIPAA standards to protect protected health information through telehealth
- Business Associate Agreements with third parties
- HIPAA-compliant platforms

**COVID-19 Response**

- Notification of Enforcement Discretion for health care providers
- Removes penalties for HIPAA violations
- Applies to all telehealth services
- BAAs not required for communications services

Summary of MAO

- A nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization originally established in 1987 that has expanded from a small, volunteer-based agency to a large full-service organization comprised of 115 employees

- Ryan White Part C grantee, Part B provider and Part D provider

- MAO promotes HIV knowledge and care to a growing client population, along with educational resources to the communities in which these clients live
Services Provided

Medical
- HIV Specialty, Primary, PrEP, Hep C, Dental Clinic, Pharmacy, nPEP

Social
- Social Work, Case Management, Transportation, Food Pantry and Translation Services

Education
- AETC, HIV and Hep C Testing, School and Community-Based Prevention Education

Behavioral
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling
Out of Alabama’s 67 counties:

- 46 counties have poverty rates that are higher than the national average
- 23 counties have poverty rates above 20%
- 5 counties have poverty rates above 30%
- Wilcox County has the highest poverty rate in Alabama, with 38.5% of its population living below the poverty line.
- According to the US Census Bureau, the average household income in Alabama is less than 200% of the federal poverty definition.
- Fully 17.1% (or roughly 1 out of every 6 of Alabama’s 4.8M residents) live below the federal poverty line
Health Professional Shortage Areas 2015

- 62 of Alabama’s 67 counties are, either partially or whole, Health Professional Shortage Areas.
Barriers for Rural Care Models

- Hospital closings in rural communities
- Buy in from state and local leaders for healthcare equity
- Higher rates of uninsured people in rural communities
- Rural culture and stigma in communities toward healthcare
- Technological issues for rural medical and behavioral health providers including broadband limits
Alabama Health
In the original Alabama e-Health project, MAO partnered with Thrive Alabama in Huntsville and Whatley Health Services, Inc in Tuscaloosa to bring telemedicine services to 50 of Alabama’s 67 counties.

An innovative strategy, telemedicine links rural satellite HIV specific primary care medical clinics to providers in their permanent clinics and delivers improved access through expanded reach by providers and health facilities to patients in rural and distant locations.
What is telemedicine at MAO?

- Telemedicine is a video chat environment between a doctor and a patient
- High definition camera and video screen with 1080p capability
- Bluetooth peripheral equipment
- Maximum security: telemedicine uses 256 bit encryption – Matches the level of encryption used by the DOD

Photo courtesy of David Kohn, Washington Post
Telemedicine/Telehealth Currently
Telemedicine/Telehealth Currently
MAO Telemedicine/Telehealth Services

- Medical care (initial visit done in person)
- Individual psychotherapy and addictions counseling
- Pharmacologic management
- Social Work services
- Individual medication nutrition therapy
- Follow-up inpatient telehealth consultations
# Telemedicine Demographics 2019

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Clinic</th>
<th>Telehealth</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Patient Count</strong></td>
<td>2038</td>
<td>1776</td>
<td>262</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Viral Load Suppression</strong></td>
<td>88.60%</td>
<td>88.40%</td>
<td>90.20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Retention Rate</strong></td>
<td>80.80%</td>
<td>80.30%</td>
<td>80.50%</td>
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As of May 31, 2019, MAO had conducted more than 4,835 telehealth contacts. We had approximately 912 patients/clients who received some part of their care through our telehealth network

- >90% of our patients reported being extremely satisfied in the care received through telehealth
- 93% virologic suppression rate of HIV in those patients that are HIV positive and receive care through telehealth
- 89% retention in care rate of our telehealth patients
Results of our Work

Based on zip code data of where patients traveled to for care as opposed to the hub site of MAO provider:

- 662,568 miles of driving saved by our patients over a 5 year period
- $361,099.56 saved in driving expenses (at prevailing GSA mileage reimbursement rate)
- 148.56 miles saved on average per encounter
- 781.33 miles saved on average per patient over 5 years
- 11042.8 hours of total drive time saved for patients traveling to satellite telehealth clinics rather than our Hub sites in Montgomery or Dothan
Financial Considerations

• Hardware Codecs
  ○ Starting price of $4500 with 1 year maintenance
  ○ Full cart-based system approximately $8500
  ○ Convene Units at $3800
  ○ Peripheral costs in addition as needed

• Software Codecs available for use with computer
  ○ Costs vary depending on product ($200 -$300 monthly)
  ○ Make sure HIPAA compliant

• Third party payers are supporting in greater numbers
COVID-19 IMPACT and Telemedicine/Telehealth

• Medical providers able to serve from home.
• Behavioral therapists and social workers assisting from home offices
• Mail-order medication delivery utilized more with telehealth consults
• Making “Suitcase Units” more of a reality after current pandemic
# Medical Advocacy & Outreach

Get to Know MAO!

Call (800) 510-4704 for FREE HIV and Hepatitis C screenings, medical and behavioral health care, education, and social services.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONTGOMERY</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administrative Office</strong> 500 Interstate Park Dr., Ste. 522 Montgomery, AL 36109 (334) 280-3349</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MAO Dental Clinic</strong> 3050 McGehee Rd. Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 239-9704</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Copeland Care Clinic</strong> 2900 McGehee Rd. Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 280-3349</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Copeland Care Pharmacy</strong> 2900 McGehee Rd. Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 239-9692</td>
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<td><strong>MAO Learning Center</strong> AETC Alabama Education &amp; Training Center Program 2530 Fisk Rd. Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 288-8091</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>MAO Wellness Center</strong> 3050 McGehee Rd. Montgomery, AL 36111 (334) 356-0549</td>
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<td><strong>DOTHAN</strong></td>
<td><strong>MAO - Dothan Clinic</strong> 1865 Honesuckle Rd., Ste. 3 Dothan, AL 36305 (334) 673-0494</td>
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<td><strong>ATMORE</strong></td>
<td><strong>MAO - Atmore</strong> 1321 S. Main St., Ste. 2 Atmore, AL 36502 (334) 280-3349</td>
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<td><strong>Alabama eHealth</strong> Satellite Clinics:</td>
<td>Barbour, Conecuh, Covington, Dallas, Escambia, Henry, Lowndes, Marengo, Perry, and Pike counties</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bridge the Gap in Rural Care!</strong> Get connected with the <strong>MAO Telehealth Resource Center</strong></td>
<td>2800 Zelda Rd Ste. 200-6 Montgomery, AL 36106 (334) 386-3839</td>
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TM Background

• TM Program started in 2017
  – Neurology & Family Medicine
• September 2017 awarded CDC funds to tailor existing TM program to PLWH
• Goal >200 unique PLWH via TM
TM Background

- Project went live in September 2018
- EMR is EPIC
- MyUFHealth portal
- Previously using Vidyo Platform
- February 2020 updated to Zoom
Clinical Eligibility Criteria

• Symptoms that **would NOT be appropriate** for a Telemedicine Visit:
  • Any acute/life-threatening illness

• Medical complications or conditions **NOT appropriate** for Telemedicine Visit:
  • CD4 count < 200 cells/mm$^3$
  • Unstable chronic disease
  • Chronic pain – requiring narcotics be prescribed during the Virtual Visit
Eligibility Criteria

Where Will Care Be Accessed?
Services

- Pediatric care
- Chronic disease treatment: HIV, Hep B/C
- Gynecology
- Social work/Case management
- Psychology
- Pharmacy
- Nutrition
Partners

• 31/31 UF CHFM sites trained as presenting sites
• CBO partners:
  – JASMYN
  – River Region
  – NFAN
  – Edgewood Pharmacy
  – Nassau County HD
Project Challenges

- Reimbursement for TM
  - Florida has no parity laws for TM
  - FL Medicaid approved TM 12/18
  - Local TGA for Ryan White approved TM in 3/19
  - Other insurances variable
Project Challenges

• Lack of dedicated staff
• Patient engagement
• Provider engagement
• Technical issues with Vidyo on patient side
Project Successes

• Weekly case conferences
  – Interdisciplinary team review of upcoming appointments
  – Screening for TM appropriateness

• Hiring of TM Navigator 12/19
Project Successes
Project Successes
Prior to COVID-19

• As of 8/26/19:
  – 71 TM visits conducted
  – 58 unique patients

• As of 2/10/20:
  – 178 TM visits conducted
  – 115 unique patients
Prior to COVID-19

• As of 2/10/20:
  Ancillary Services:
  – Psychology (3 visits, 2 unique patients)
  CBO Partners
  – Nassau County only
Changes Since COVID-19

• UF CARES is a Hospital Based Clinic

• UF Health has consolidated entrances for patients and staff
Changes Since COVID-19

- Eligibility Criteria loosened
- All patients eligible regardless of CD4 count
- All patients are converted to TM visit or rescheduled for summer
- Emergency care only in clinic
Updates Since COVID-19

• Increase in utilization of TM from community partners
• Reimbursement for TM from most insurance plans
• Connection issues mostly resolved with Zoom
Updates Since COVID-19

• As of 3/30/20:
  – TM visits conducted 257
  – Unique patients 168

• Ancillary Services:
  – Psychology (10 visits, 9 unique patients)
  – Pharmacy
  – Nutrition
thank you!
View the Questions & Answers from this webinar on HealthHIV.org/TeleHealthHIV
SYNChronicity
Virtually syncing HIV, HCV, STI and LGBTQ Health
JUNE 23-25, 2020/SYNC2020.org
Thank you!

Please complete the evaluation & telehealth survey that will be sent to your email after this webinar.

Visit HealthHIV.org/TeleHealthHIV to access webinar archives, resources, and capacity building assistance.