California launches statewide telehealth network

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The Golden State launches the California Telehealth Network, the largest network of its kind.

California's telemedicine network is now operational.

The statewide California Telehealth Network [1] enables underserved clinics to access, via modified video conferencing technology, specialists and surgeons who provide everything from drug advice to emergency services.

Doctors at university medical centers such as UCSF and UC Davis will connect with about 800 healthcare facilities in both rural and urban areas.

Gov.Arnold Schwarzenegger yesterday launched the $30 million project, the majority of which was funded by the Federal Communications Commission, at the UC Davis Cancer Center.

The public-private California Emerging Technology Fund, the University of California — which administers the system — and companies such AT&T Inc. also provided funding for the project. AT&T landed the contract to build a medical-grade telecommunications system, according to the university [2].

The state plans to have the system running at full capacity by 2011.

"Telehealth is the future of medicine and California is committed to leading the way," said Governor Schwarzenegger in a prepared statement.

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