California Telehealth Network: Improving Health Care To Our Rural and Medically Underserved

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Broadband Task Force Set Telehealth Network Goal

- Governor's Broadband Task Force Recommendation '06: Form a telehealth network

- California won a $22.1 million from the FCC's Rural Health Care Pilot Project program

- It's a big statewide tent:

    - University of California Office of the President with UC Davis Health System are legally and financially responsible partner for the project.

    - Other key partners are Office of the Governor, California Public Utilities Commission, California Business, Housing & Transportation Agency, & California Health and Human Resources.

    - Nearly $10 million more were contributed by partners such as California Emerging Technology Fund, UnitedHealth, California Teleconnect Fund, National Coalition for Health Integration, and the California HealthCare Foundation.

    - Other advisory group participants: health care provider associations and existing telehealth networks

The CTN Vision

• Improve access to quality care in the State's rural and medically underserved communities by connecting them with health resources.

Technology is a powerful force in health care transformation, because telehealth offers the opportunity to extend health care resources to underserved regions.

Information and telecommunications technology provides a platform for accurate health data exchange between providers and patients.

Technology helps establish new models of health care delivery across the economic and geographic spectrum.

Elements of a Technology-Enabled Health Care System

- Robust, reliable, secure, cost effective and sustainable broadband infrastructure

- Resources (content) that enable providers and patients in rural/remote/tribal and urban underserved areas to connect with health resources

- Trained workforce of staff and providers who embrace technology; executive leadership managing network and services as a public enterprise.

- Embracing of eHealth and telehealth into the "best practice of health care" by providers, investors, and institutional partners.

- Development of health & medical care protocols for services to optimize the use of information & broadband technology

Broadband Dependant Applications

- Electronic Health Records

- Telehealth Applications

- Distance Education

- e-Prescribing

- Home Monitoring of Patients

- Health Information Exchange

The Vision for Applications

• All patients have a 'healthcare home" with electronic health records. Providers can exchange appropriate health information privately and securely wherever and whenever the patient needs care.

• Video language interpreting for multi-lingual situations

• Patient educational programs

• Specialty consultation where the patient is located in his primary doctor's office, emergency room, skilled nursing facility or hospital.

• Chronic disease management programs that connect to the patient in her home.

Other eHealth Applications Planned

- Electronic Health Records (EHR)
- Health Information Exchanges – partnering with Cal eConnect (State's designated HIE provider)
- Collaboration with State's designed agencies assisting providers with CMS/MediCare "meaningful use" provisions
- Telemedicine and Teleconferencing to Member Sites

Status Report

- AT&T awarded CTN contract as statewide master vendor

- Construction begins late summer pending Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) approval of required filings.

- Broadband network will deploy state-of-the-art, peer to peer, Multi Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) broadband services at rates significantly below commercial rates and comparable or better to rates enjoyed by State of California agencies.

- CTN offers standardized rates regardless of the health care site's location which eliminates costly distance charges often applied to rural locations.

- Initial network will service 50 sites, but over 850 sites have been approved for participation in the program, predominantly rural health care anchor institutions, Critical Access Hospitals, public and private clinics throughout California. The goal is connecting 2,000+ sites over time.

Questions?

CTN website: www.caltelehealth.org

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