



Idaho Telehealth Strategic Planning Initiative

IDAHO TELEHEALTH COUNCIL

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ICF Introduction

- Public company on NASDAQ with symbol “ICFI”
- Over 40 years of experience—founded in 1969
- End-to-end management, technology, and policy services—advise, implement, improve
- More than 4,500 employees
- Global presence with more than 60 offices, headquartered in the Washington, DC, area
- Mission—We partner with our clients to conceive, implement, and enhance solutions and services that protect and improve the quality of life

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Goals of Telehealth Plan



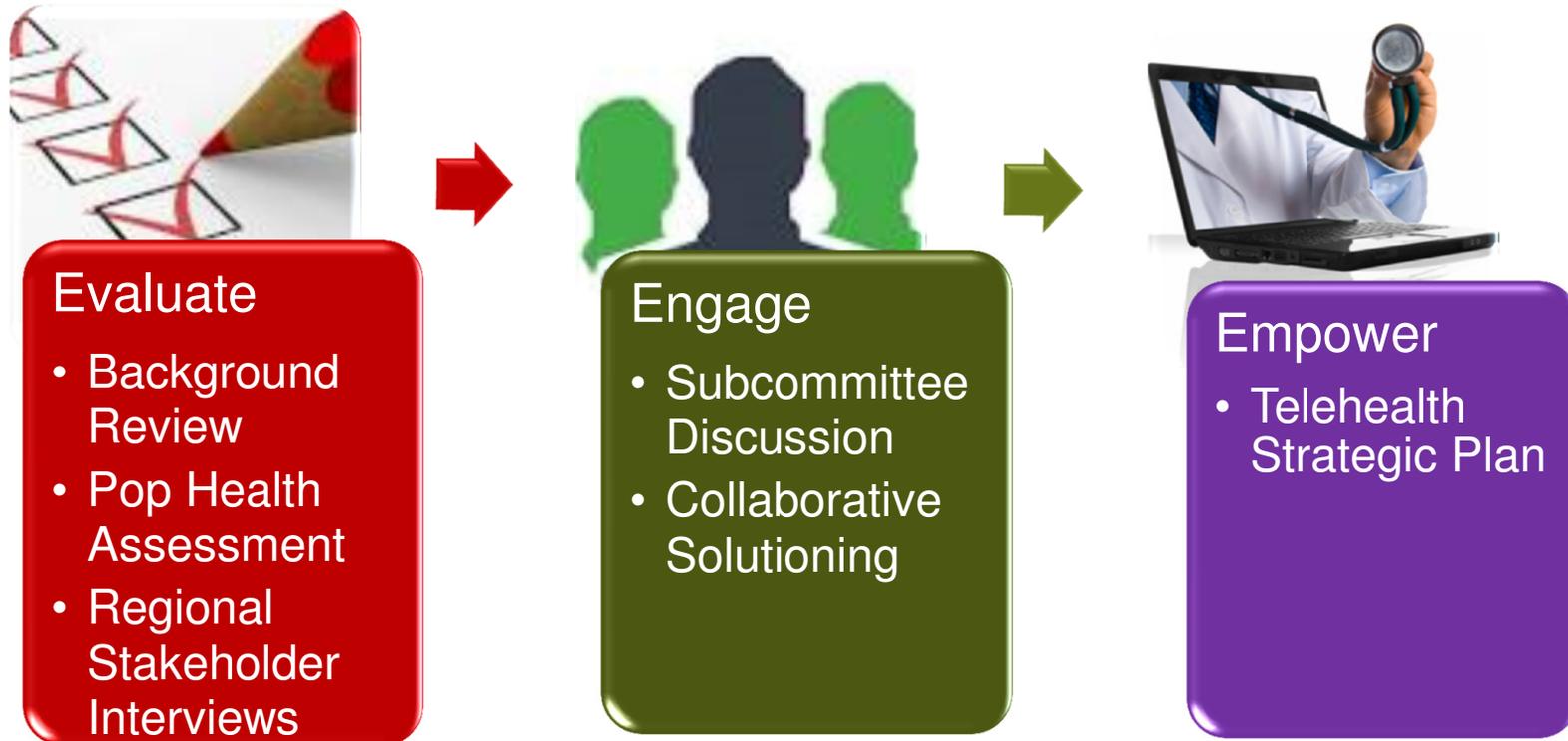
The plan aims to support the expansion of telehealth services in Idaho as a strategy to deliver effective and safe medical care and information to meet patient needs.



Key focus areas for plan are:

- Improve understanding of the current use of telehealth services;
- Identify barriers and facilitators to current use of telehealth;
- Serve as a compendium of strategies for expanding the use of telehealth;
- Foster conversation and debate, and provide a forum to build shared understanding and develop consensus about how to expand telehealth;
- Guide the task force in choosing telehealth implementation strategies that are the most feasible and impactful;

Idaho Telehealth Plan Process



Evaluate: Assessment and Data Collection



- **Background/Document Review**
 - Gather information on licensing, credentialing, reimbursement, privacy (HIPAA) procedures, as well as other standards and practice guidelines for Idaho
 - Compare and contrast Idaho’s laws with national standards and practice guidelines
- **Population Health Assessment**
 - Identify, compile and review data on demographics, major health issues, and provider availability
 - Identify gaps and areas of unmet need that could be addressed using a telehealth service delivery model
- **Regional stakeholder interviews topics included:**
 - Current use of telehealth services at the regional level
 - Barriers and facilitators to current and future use of telehealth
 - Future telehealth needs
 - Potential regional champions for telehealth
 - Potentially effective strategies for engaging and communicating with stakeholders
 - Additional stakeholders that would be beneficial to involve



SELECTED KEY FINDINGS



Current Telehealth Service Delivery

- The reported telemedicine services include (in order of frequency):

Telepsychiatry	Telepharmacy
Telecardiology	Teleoncology
Telestroke	Sleep care
Teledermatology	Rheumatology
Teleradiology	Tele ER consults
Neurology	Wound Care
Tele-ICU	Tele-hospitalists
Tele-infectious disease	

Facilitators of Successful Use of Telehealth



- Physician buy-in due to:
 - Belief in the quality of services provided
 - Increased accessibility of service
 - Improved ability of primary care physician to manage patient in community setting
 - Reduced patient wait times and reduced patient travel
 - Initial positive experience with service delivery
 - Familiarity with telehealth providers
- Administrative support as evidenced by:
 - Belief in the value of telehealth services
 - Promotion of telehealth services to providers and patients
 - Financial support
- Strong, collaborative working relationships between providers (e.g. physicians, nurses, etc.) and IT staff

Challenges to Use of Telehealth



- Lack of provider buy-in
 - Perception physician will be viewed as “not proficient”
 - Lack of familiarity with telehealth provider
 - Lack of willingness to “share” patient
 - Distrust in quality of services provided
 - Lack of willingness to change style of service provision
 - Lack of comfort with technology
- Lack of administrative buy in
- Limited availability of telehealth providers
- Reimbursement challenges
- Cost of equipment and technology for rural hospitals





Value/Benefits of Telehealth for Idaho

- Increases access to care, especially for rural populations
- Increases access to specialists
- Improves timeliness of diagnosis and care
- Enhances relationship between primary care physician and patient
- Reduces cost and time for patients
- Encourages team approach to patient management
- Potentially reduces physician workload
- May help address general reimbursement challenges
- Helps facilitate the medical home model
- Bolsters community's economic stability



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations: Three Key Areas



Engagement and
Communications



Telehealth Service
Delivery



Policy/Advocacy



Engagement and Communications

- ***Build consensus about what constitutes telehealth and high quality service delivery***
 - ***Action Step 1: Work with the Idaho Telehealth Council to develop a definition of telehealth***
 - ***Strategy 1.1: Build upon the Federation of State Medical Board’s (FSMB) definition***
 - ***Strategy 1.2: Ensure consistent messaging regarding the agreed upon definition***
 - ***Action Step 2: Work with Idaho Telehealth Council to develop standards of care for telehealth***
 - ***Strategy 1.1: Explore the feasibility of building upon standards identified by FSMB and the American Telemedicine Association (ATA)***

Engagement and Communications, cont.



▪ Increase healthcare system buy-in

- **Action Step 1:** Develop a plan to increase administrative buy-in
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Align the delivery of telehealth services with existing initiatives (TSE, PCMH)
 - **Strategy 1.2:** Conduct outreach to tribal health organizations
 - **Strategy 1.3:** Conduct outreach to out-of –state healthcare organizations that provide telehealth services in Idaho
 - **Strategy 1.4:** *Create and conduct tailored presentations (e.g. cost-effectiveness) for hospital executives and board of trustees*
- **Action Step 2:** Encourage continued relationships between larger and smaller, rural hospitals



Engagement and Communications, cont.

▪ Increase provider buy-in

- **Action Step 1:** Educate providers about the benefits of telehealth
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Use an academic detailing approach for primary care providers
 - **Strategy 1.2:** Have “champions” conduct presentations to providers and professional organizations
 - **Strategy 1.3:** Create materials that market the benefits of telehealth
- **Action Step 2:** Encourage/provide opportunities for primary care and telehealth providers to meet and build relationships
 - **Strategy 2.1:** Create/compile list of telehealth providers who work in the state
 - **Strategy 2.2:** Hold a “Meet the Telehealth Provider” events
- **Action Step 3:** Increase provider comfort with equipment and technology
 - **Strategy 3.1:** Encourage more collaboration between providers and IT staff

Engagement and Communications cont.



▪ Increase patient awareness, support and receptivity

- **Action Step 1:** Improve patient understanding of the availability and benefits of telehealth
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Develop a plan to increase marketing/education efforts (e.g. patient success stories, articles, blogs, institutional specific marketing materials, FAQ document)
 - **Strategy 1.2:** Encourage providers to promote telehealth services to patients
- **Action Step 2:** Consider expanding use of telehealth for more patient education related services (e.g. diabetes management)
- **Action Step 3:** Build awareness in local communities of how telehealth can enable communities and families to be healthy through local events (e.g. health fairs)

Engagement and Communications, cont.



- ***Increase payer participation***

- ***Action Step 1:*** Engage more payers to participate in the Taskforce and Idaho Telehealth Council
- ***Action Step 2:*** Convene a meeting of private and public payers to discuss the future of telehealth reimbursement
- ***Action Step 3:*** Encourage payers to create FAQ documents about reimbursement policies and procedures

Telehealth Service Delivery



- **Improve understanding of patients' needs (demand)**
 - **Action Step 1:** Improve understanding of the needs of rural populations
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Conduct a rural telehealth needs assessment
 - **Action Step 2:** Identify services that offer the greatest benefits to patients
 - **Strategy 2.1:** Conduct a statewide patient needs assessment
 - **Strategy 2.2:** Conduct survey/interviews with primary care providers
 - **Strategy 2.3:** *Identify and review best practices (e.g. mental health & communication to Council)*
 - **Action Step 3:** Explore reasons for low patient utilization
 - **Strategy 3.1:** Conduct survey/interviews with health care systems and primary care providers to understand reasons for low (and high) utilization
 - **Strategy 3.2:** Conduct a statewide patient needs assessment

Telehealth Service Delivery



▪ Improve understanding of cost implications

- **Action Step 1:** Assess the cost and potential savings of telehealth service delivery
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Determine the economic value of reducing travel, keeping dollars in the community, reducing ER visits and reducing hospital admissions
- **Action Step 2:** Present findings to key stakeholders
 - **Strategy 2.1:** Conduct webinars/ meetings with administrators and legislators
 - **Strategy 2.2:** Develop user friendly materials for other audiences (e.g. business community, primary care providers)

Telehealth Service Delivery



- **Improve the availability of telehealth providers**
 - **Action Step 1:** Assess the adequacy of existing services
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Conduct a gap analysis between available supply and demand
 - **Strategy 1.2:** Survey/interview telehealth providers to understand barriers and facilitators
 - **Action Step 2:** Convene meeting with stakeholders to brainstorm strategies for increasing the supply of telehealth providers, if needed



- **Facilitate the licensure process**

- **Action Step 1:** *Work with the Idaho State Board of Medicine to increase awareness of the expedited licensure process*
- **Action Step 2:** *Work with the Idaho State Board of Medicine to assess extent of use of expedited licensure for telehealth providers and identify common challenges and facilitators*
- **Action Step 3:** *Assess the adequacy of licensing options for non-physician providers (e.g. agreement for nurses, 30 day provision for mental health providers)*
- **Action Step 4:** *If warranted, explore use of other licensing options such as mutual reciprocity*



- **Facilitate the credentialing process:**

- **Action Step 1:** *Assess existing challenges/barriers for credentialing telehealth providers*
- **Action Step 2:** *Explore the possibility of developing a standardized credentialing process*
- **Action Step 3:** *Engage partners with vested interest in credentialing (e.g. licensing boards for mid-level providers, Bureau of Facility Standards) to assess if current policies or procedures need updating*

Policy/Advocacy



■ **Improve understanding, availability and use of reimbursement options**

– **Action Step 1:** *Improve understanding of Medicare and Medicaid policies and procedures*

• **Strategy 1.1:** *Circulate CMS policy and procedures document:*

<http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/telehealthsrvcfsfctsht.pdf>

• **Strategy 1.2:** *Circulate the Idaho Telehealth Policy document*

<http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Portals/0/Providers/Medicaid/TelehealthPolicy.pdf>

• **Strategy 1.3:** *Create and disseminate a user friendly, 1 page at-a-glance version of the above policy document*

– **Action Step 2:** *Diversify funding streams for telehealth services*

• **Strategy 2.1:** *Encourage private payer reimbursement of telehealth services*

• **Strategy 2.2:** *Encourage promotion of private payer pilot study results*

• **Strategy 2.3:** *Explore the possibility of Medicaid reimbursement for Medicare approved telehealth services*

