

2020annualreport  
**CLOSING THE GAP DURING THE PANDEMIC**



**Kathy  
S. Schwarting, MHA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Palmetto Care Connections



**Graham  
Adams, PhD**  
Chairman  
Chief Executive Officer  
SC Office of Rural Health



**Rick  
Foster, MD**  
Vice Chairman  
Retired Executive Director  
Catalyst for Health,  
SC Hospital Association



**Will  
Harms, MD, MBA**  
Vice President/Medical Affairs  
BlueCross and BlueShield of SC



**Ann  
Lewis, MHA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
CareSouth Carolina

## board of directors and a letter from the chief executive officer

Who could have foreseen that a worldwide pandemic would catapult telehealth and broadband access into the national spotlight and transform the way that health care is delivered in a public health emergency? Throughout the nation, adoption and use of telehealth technologies have grown exponentially and broadband access has been touted as a necessity and compared to the advent of electricity as the “next greatest thing.”

The rise of virtual learning and telehealth utilization illuminated the digital divide that many South Carolina households and businesses face. The maps commissioned by Palmetto Care Connections, South Carolina Office of Rural Health, and the South Carolina Hospital Association in 2019 indicated that 650,000 South Carolinians/180,000 households did not have the minimum 25/3 internet access recommended by the Federal Communications Commission. The maps helped set the foundation for broadband development strategies throughout the state in 2020.

Loosened federal and state telehealth reimbursement regulations helped health care providers embrace telehealth and make it available to patients in the home. Patient response to this new delivery method for health care has been phenomenal. PCC and the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance, along with numerous partners, have communicated the need for state legislation that will allow for continued telehealth reimbursement after the public health emergency ends.

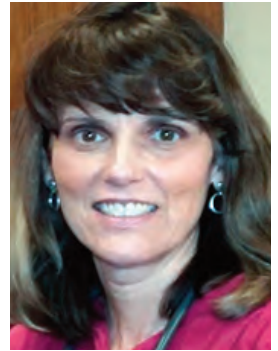
In 2020, PCC celebrated 10 years of serving the rural and underserved areas of our state through technology, broadband and telehealth adoption strategies. Much has been accomplished but there is still so much more to do! This Annual Report highlights many of the ways that PCC has worked diligently to close the gaps in telehealth and broadband accessibility through implementation, education and advocacy. We are grateful to our partners and our Board of Directors who have joined us in working to make a difference for South Carolinians, especially during the pandemic.

As we look to the future, there is still some uncertainty about COVID-19 and how it will continue to affect our daily lives, but there is no doubt that telehealth and broadband expansion will be in the forefront of the year ahead.





**John  
H. Magill**  
Retired State Director  
SC Department of Mental Health



**Danette  
McAlhaney, MD**  
Family Practitioner  
Bamberg Family Practice



**James  
McElligott, MD**  
Secretary  
Medical Director  
of Telehealth Services  
Assistant Professor,  
General Pediatrics  
Medical University of SC



**Meera  
Narasimhan MD, DFAPA**  
Treasurer  
Associate Provost,  
Health Sciences University of SC  
Professor and Chair  
Department of NeuroSciences  
and Behavioral Science  
University of SC School of Medicine



**Rich  
Rogers**  
Senior Vice President  
Chief Information Officer  
Prisma Health



CELEBRATING  
TEN YEARS

**PALMETTO  
CARE  
CONNECTIONS™**

PCC received virtual congratulations and well wishes from more than 30 of its partners in celebration of 10 years of serving rural and underserved communities. Here is just a sample of those remarks.

To view the complete PCC 10th Anniversary video go to

[palmettocareconnections.org/about/palmettocareconnections](http://palmettocareconnections.org/about/palmettocareconnections)



Congressman James Clyburn, U. S. House of Representatives  
**"Happy Anniversary to Palmetto Care Connections. It's been a great decade."**



SC Senator Thomas Alexander  
**"PCC has been on the cutting edge of making South Carolina what it is today...meeting the needs of our citizens in a very critical time."**



SC Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter  
**"We're glad you're here serving the people in our community."**



Ryan Kruis  
MUSC Center for Telehealth  
**"The people of South Carolina are so fortunate to have such fierce advocates fighting for increased broadband access and telehealth throughout our state."**



James McElligott, MD  
Medical University of South Carolina  
**"Every connection PCC makes, makes this state a better place."**



Vicki Young, Ph.D., South Carolina Primary Health Care Association  
**"Thank you to the PCC family for all of your hard work and impact in the community."**



Ameila Bischoff, Prisma Health  
**"Thank you for being South Carolina's Broadband connoisseur, for cultivating collaboration and occasionally being a referee when we need it."**



Ann Lewis, CareSouth Carolina  
**"PCC is so very important in the health of South Carolinians."**



# 1 focus area 1 **broadband**

Improving coverage, affordability and quality of Broadband service

# 2 focus area 2 **technology**

Supporting the effective and efficient use of innovations in Technology

# 3 focus area 3 **telehealth**

Advancing the adoption of Telehealth for increasing access to quality care



PCC 2020 Team Members: Program Assistant Ramona Midkiff, Director of Finance Scott Moody, CEO Kathy Schwarting, Director of Technology Matt Hiatt, Director of Education Davia Smith, Technology Analyst Ethan Kemp and Director of Public Relations and Program Development Kathy Rhoad. Telehealth Coordinator Breanna Parham (not pictured) joined the team in November.

**The presence and the name of Palmetto Care Connections has grown and is a staple of the telehealth discussions all across the state... I guess I never really knew how much need and gap needs to be filled, and Palmetto Care Connections has really done that.**

JAMES MCELLIGOTT, M.D., MSCR  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES  
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

## **mission**

To assist providers in keeping health care local and connecting rural and underserved South Carolinians to quality services through broadband, technology and telehealth.

## **vision**

To increase access to quality health care for rural and underserved South Carolinians through telehealth, broadband and technology.

# impact

## DURING COVID-19



**101,833**  
hotspots

PCC assisted the SC Department of Education with identifying the number of households that needed government issued hotspots to participate in virtual learning while schools closed during COVID-19.



**covid-19  
webinar  
wednesday  
specials**

PCC hosted 9 specific COVID-19 webinars to educate participants about telehealth and broadband updates made during the pandemic.



**7,443**  
page  
views

In partnership with SC Office of Rural Health and SC Hospital Association, PCC released maps on its website that indicate broadband areas of need in SC.



**500+**  
vidyo  
user  
accounts

PCC created 500+ Vidyo user accounts for health care providers to utilize telehealth visits.



**38**  
rural  
schools

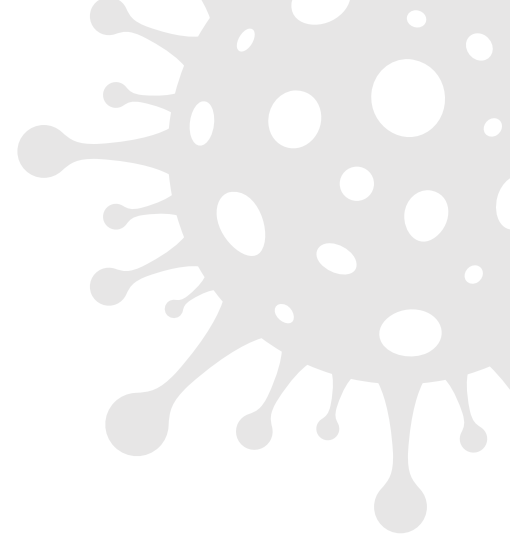
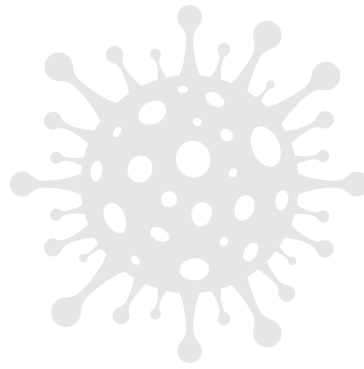
PCC provided telehealth technical assistance to schools in 7 counties during the pandemic.



# \$7,325,892

## grant application

PCC submitted a 3 year Connected Care Pilot Project to the Federal Communications Commission on behalf of 6 SC health care organizations to provide 5,000 low-income households with internet access.



# 10,000+

## students

PCC partnered with Orangeburg County School District (OCS D) and telehealth providers to provide access to telehealth services for all OCS D students and their families.



# 10+

## guest webinar and podcast features

The PCC Team participated as a guest in several webinars and podcasts to advocate for telehealth and broadband in SC.



# 50+

## health care providers

PCC assisted more than 50 health care providers with telehealth implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# 500+

## registrants

PCC hosted its first Virtual Telehealth Summit and set a record-breaking number of registrants for the event.



# 7

## nursing home facilities

Three school districts repurposed telehealth equipment to rural nursing home facilities while schools were closed.

# CLOSING THE GAP DURING THE PANDEMIC



# south carolina telehealth alliance

The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) is a statewide collaboration of many organizations joining forces to expand telehealth services across the state.

The SCTA provides guidance, assists with strategic development, and advises on technology and standards to develop an open-access network. This open-access network gives all South Carolina residents access to quality health care, while effectively managing the cost of providing care.

The SCTA Advisory Council is co-chaired by James McElligott, M.D., MSCR of the Medical University of SC and Kathy Schwarting, MHA, CEO of Palmetto Care Connections.

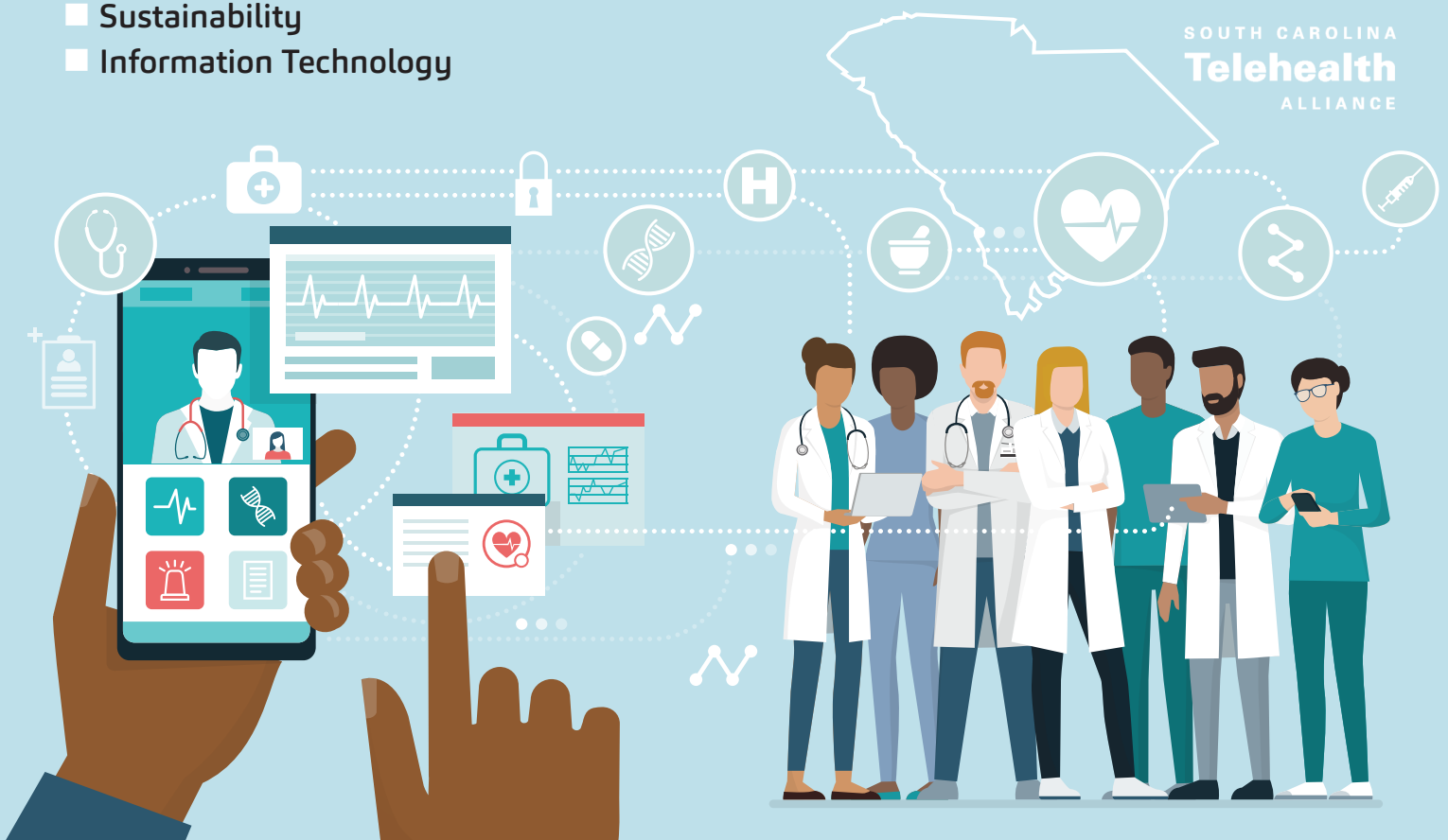
PCC serves on several SCTA Workgroups including:

- **Education**
- **Content Advisory**
- **Sustainability**
- **Information Technology**

# PART

## pcc and scta collaboration during 2020 included:

- **expanding rural broadband access**
- **telehealth awareness & education**
- **telehealth advocacy**
- **school-based telehealth**
  - Connected Spartanburg and Cherokee county schools with Spartanburg Regional Medical Center providers.
  - Confirmed equipment function and retrained staff at schools in these counties:
    - **Allendale**
    - **Bamberg**
    - **Barnwell**
    - **Cherokee**
    - **Dillon**
    - **Spartanburg**





# Partnership



## 2020 consortium infrastructure upgrades

Statewide PSPN (SC Broadband Consortium) telehealth infrastructure allowed SC to quickly pivot and rapidly expand telehealth services during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic's first wave.

In March of 2020, MUSC and SCTA telehealth engineers embarked on a project to replace and upgrade all Cisco Infrastructure on the broadband consortium network led by PCC.

Fifteen physical servers were upgraded and replaced with new virtual machine technology which provides the most up to date video bridging, routing, management and account administration features. Twin sets of consortium infrastructure provide redundancy for continuous uptime in the delivery of telehealth services. This redundancy allowed telehealth engineers to complete the upgrades with minimum downtime to telehealth providers at a time where these services were in highest demand because of the pandemic.

Michael Haschker  
Manager, Telehealth Technologies MUSC  
IT Workgroup Lead SCTA

## SCTA STRATEGIES

- open access
- rural focus
- service development
- mental health
- education & training
- collaboration
- outcomes
- promotions & sustainability

PCC has been and continues to be a reliable, dependable and steady partner with Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System for all things telehealth related. When Spartanburg Regional launched its first school-based telehealth program in 2018, PCC was quick to respond and aided with broadband connection, telehealth cart assembly and training for our staff. PCC has been instrumental in Spartanburg Regional's expansion of telehealth services in Union and Cherokee counties and is a vital partner in the success of our telehealth services. We look forward to future telehealth endeavors with PCC's continued support and guidance.

SUSIE WOODWARD,  
DIRECTOR OF MARKET DEVELOPMENT  
AND TELEHEALTH SERVICES



# TECHNOL

support during pandemic

**38**

**schools  
received  
telehealth  
support  
and training**

**500+**

**sites received video  
infrastructure  
and support**

- Spartanburg Regional Medical Center
- Hope Health (FQHC)
- Family Health Center (FQHC)
- CareSouth Carolina, Inc. (FQHC)
- Behavioral Health Services Association (BHSA)

**37**

**BHSA sites  
received additional  
telehealth  
platform training  
and assistance**

“The ALPHA Behavioral Health Center made the switch to PCC for our technology support and growth because of their ability to deliver more to our agency at a cost-savings. PCC utilizes a teaching model of trouble shooting with our staff to handle future problems. PCC has assisted our agency with the growth of telehealth services while meeting all the requirements of safety and security resulting in the expansion of our programs for underserved populations.”



MARA H. JONES, LPCS, LPC, LAC, AADC  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
THE ALPHA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER

# LOGY

210

managed  
workstations

14

managed  
servers

## managed IT services

Rural Health care providers are particularly vulnerable to cyberattacks because they often don't have information technology staff or departments to maintain and manage their computer systems and networks. PCC has filled that gap by offering rural providers remote managed IT services that proactively provide regular, preventative maintenance that increases the functionality and security of servers, PCs and other network devices. PCC has continued to grow its managed IT services throughout the pandemic as providers focused on their telehealth capabilities.

125+

telehealth carts  
managed statewide

Redeployed school-based telehealth equipment to nursing homes and S.C. Department of Corrections facilities for telehealth assessments while schools were closed.

200+

BHSA user  
accounts  
created



**one in  
five small  
businesses  
fall victim to a  
cyber-attack**

VOX



**76% of  
cyber-attacks  
are financially  
motivated**

VERIZON BUSINESS



**every 11  
seconds a  
business  
falls victim  
to a  
malware  
attack**

CYBERSECURITY VENTURES



# BROADBAND

As the leader of the South Carolina Broadband Consortium, PCC helps health care providers receive broadband savings through the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund Program by assisting them with the internet service provider bidding process and filing the appropriate information, invoices and supporting documentation to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

## NEW BUSINESS

- free clinics
- correctional facilities
- added additional circuits for current members

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- securing additional in-state Consortium members
- expanding Consortium members to include SCHA partner associations across the country

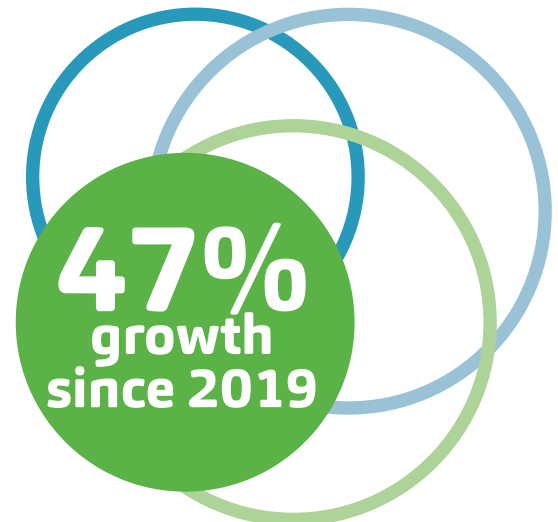
## SC BROADBAND CONSORTIUM FY2020

**340** new circuits

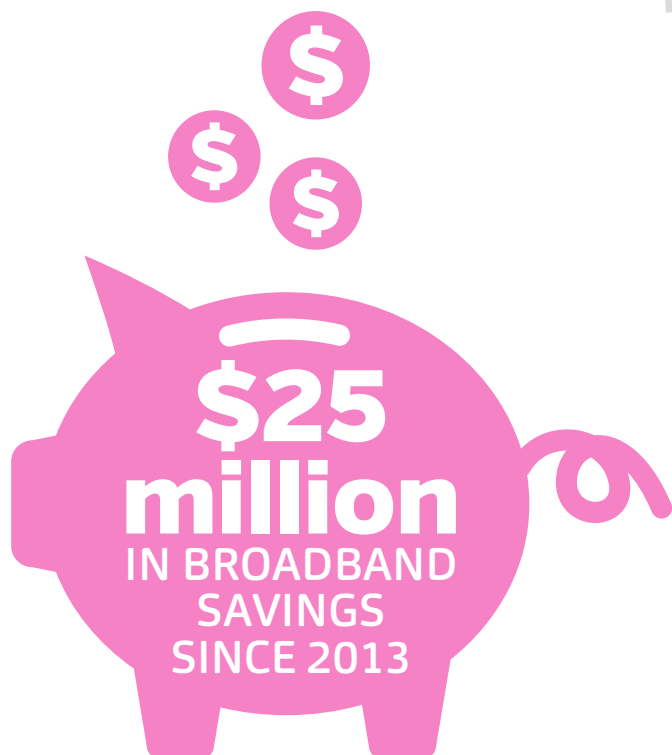
**\$13,821,827** savings per year for three years

## 99 SC ORGANIZATIONS

- 31** behavioral health centers
- 28** non-profit hospitals
- 21** federally qualified health centers
- 13** rural health clinics and free clinics
- 3** skilled nursing facilities
- 3** teaching hospitals



# AND



CareSouth Carolina has been a member of the PCC broadband consortium for many, many years. Thanks in large part to the reimbursements from the Healthcare Connect Fund Program, we have had the ability to grow our information technology infrastructure to meet the needs of CareSouth's more than 38,000 patients and 500 employees at 14 rural medical practices in South Carolina's Pee Dee region.



GARY HERRINGTON  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER



Prisma Health has valued our collaborative partnership with Palmetto Care Connections for several years. We have been on a common journey to extend virtual health capabilities to underserved communities across South Carolina. The benefits of this relationship were evident in 2020 as we have been able to extend necessary health care services during a time of greatest need.



RICH ROGERS  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER  
AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT



**650,000 South Carolinians  
180,000 Households**

**Do not have the minimum  
25/3 mbps internet access  
recommended by the FCC.**

# BROADBAND

The rise of virtual learning and telehealth utilization illuminated the digital divide that many households and businesses face in South Carolina. According to the Federal Communications Commission, 25/3 is the minimum standard for internet download and upload speeds.

In 2020, PCC released maps of each county that indicate areas in need of broadband access and areas with the best available technology in South Carolina. The maps were commissioned by PCC, South Carolina Office of Rural Health, and the South Carolina Hospital Association.

The maps were updated by the SC Telecommunications and Broadband Association in March 2020 and both sets are posted on [palmettocareconnections.org](https://palmettocareconnections.org) for comparison.

The link to the maps and a letter were sent to the SC General Assembly in April 2020.

## AREAS IN NEED OF TECHNOLOGY

### Speed Tiers (download / upload)

- 300 Mbps / 10 Mbps
- 100 Mbps / 3 Mbps
- 25 Mbps / 3 Mbps

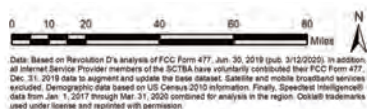
### Density of Unserved Households (sq. mi.)

- 200 or More
- 25 - 199
- 1 - 24
- > 0 and < 1
- Zero Households

## AREAS WITH THE BEST AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY

### Best Available Technology (type | capability)

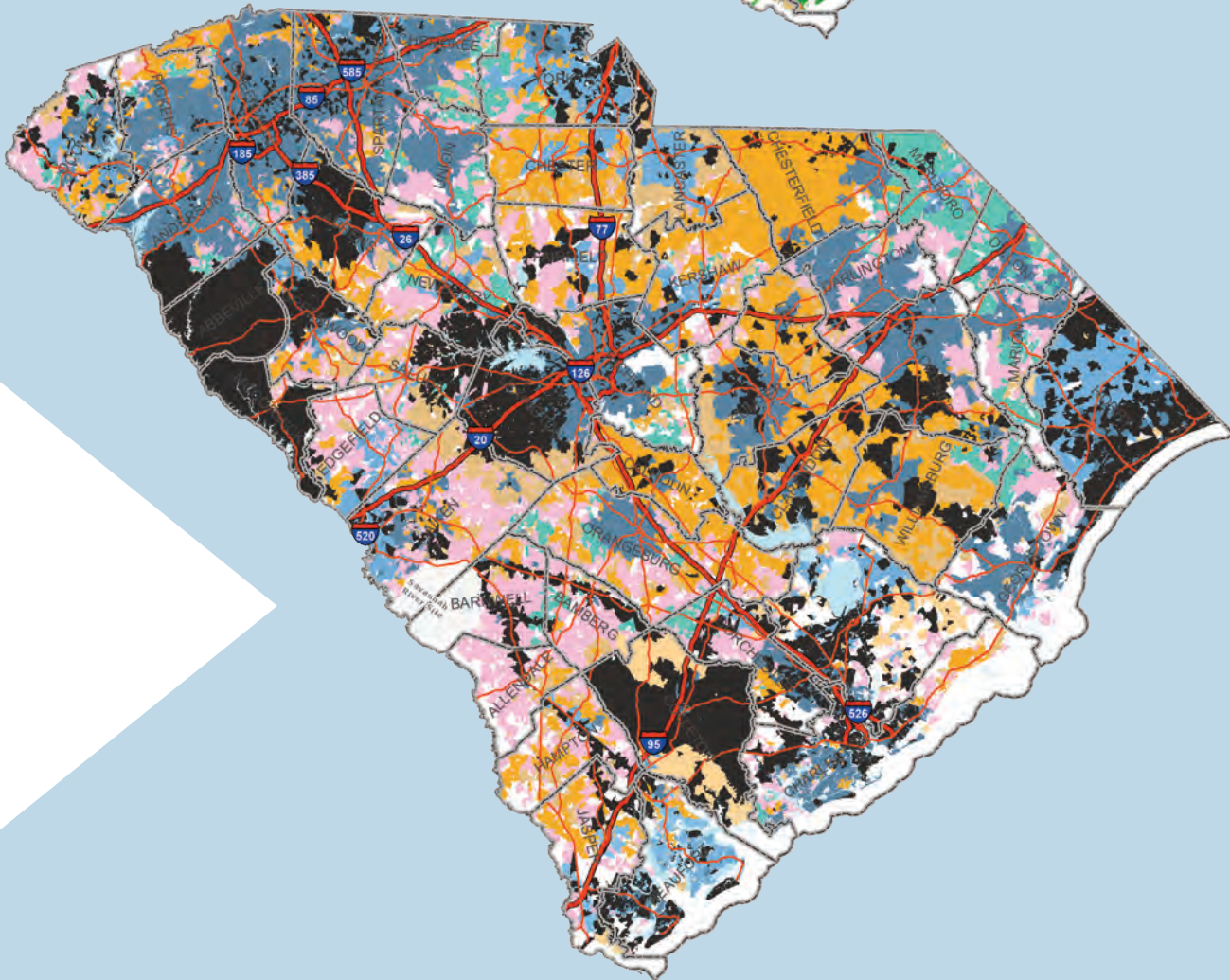
- Fiber | Speeds >= 300 Mbps/10 Mbps
- Cable (DOCSIS 3.1+) | Speeds >= 300 Mbps/10 Mbps
- Cable (DOCSIS 3.0) | Speeds >= 100 Mbps/3 Mbps
- Cable (DOCSIS < 2.0) | Speeds >= 25 Mbps/3 Mbps
- VDSL (Fiber-To-The-Curb) | Speeds >= 25 Mbps/3 Mbps
- ADSL2, ADSL2+ | Speeds >= 10 Mbps/1 Mbps
- Fixed Wireless | Speeds >= 10 Mbps/1 Mbps
- ADSL | Speeds >= 3 Mbps/768 kbps
- No Internet Service Available
- Zero Households



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AND





# TELEHEA



## PCC collaborates with education officials on broadband



As schools transitioned to virtual learning, Palmetto Care Connections partnered with the Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to identify students and households without adequate broadband coverage. The information assisted SCDE in the statewide distribution of Mifi mobile hot spots.

- Cleaned database of students living in 250% poverty to help SCDE identify eligible households for state supported mobile hot spots
- Removed all duplicative addresses
- Partnered with USC to geocode all student addresses
- Distributed student data file to service providers



## OCSD launches virtual health access

In Fall 2020, PCC partnered with the Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) to launch the S.M.A.R.T. (Students Medical Access to Resources in Telehealth) Virtual Health Collaborative, a community partnership to increase access to telehealth resources for all OCSD students and their families. An app for the program appears on all district-issued devices that leads to a telehealth provider directory.

PCC CEO Kathy Schwarting, Orangeburg County District Superintendent Dr. Shawn Foster, then-Regional Medical Center President and CEO Charles Williams sign a memorandum of understanding to link students to telehealth services



## voorhees college adds telehealth for students

PCC assisted Voorhees College, a private, liberal arts, historically black college in Denmark, SC with planning and implementing a telehealth program for their students. PCC assisted with equipment recommendations, policies and procedures, and connecting with the Family Health Center (FQHC) headquartered in Orangeburg to provide primary care and specialty services.

“Many residents of the Ehrhardt community have barriers that limit the health care they receive. Transportation is one of their biggest hurdles. With telehealth access here at the pharmacy, many residents can walk here and see their doctor virtually.”

DONNA AVANT, PHARMACIST/OWNER OF EHRHARDT PHARMACY



Pharmacist Donna Avant helps connect her customers to their health care providers using Telehealth.

## PCC receives \$300,000 RHND grant

- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Network Development Grant (RHND) awarded July 1, 2020
- \$300,00 for three years
- Purpose: To establish a virtual access telehealth network and expand access to health care delivery in targeted rural SC communities at independent pharmacies, churches and a tribal community center.
- Targeted communities located in the rural counties of Bamberg, Dorchester, Georgetown and Orangeburg

“Telehealth has so many possibilities. Especially in our current COVID-19 environment, telehealth is helping us keep patients safe. It allows us to diagnose and treat many illnesses and ailments while the patient is still at home, so they don’t have to come to our office waiting room and be exposed to other sick people.”

DANETTE MCALHANEY, MD  
OWNER OF BAMBERG FAMILY PRACTICE







### People's Choice Winner

**"Serving Up Wellness Telehealth Education in SC Schools,"** Author: Kimberly South, Prisma Health. Madison Kuch (left) and Madelyn Hutnyak (right)



### Scientific Winner

**"Comparison of Diagnostic Yield for Telegenetics versus In-Person Genetics Evaluations,"** Author: Michael Lyons, Greenwood Genetic Center



### Programmatic Winner

**"Telenutrition Decreases Barriers to Surgery for Adolescents with Severe Obesity,"** Authors: Molly Mills, RDN, LD (left); Sarah B. Hales, PhD (right); Nina Crowley, PhD, RDN, LD; James McElligott, MD, MSCR; Aaron Leshner, MD, MSCR Medical University of SC

# Closing the Gap 2020

8th annual  
telehealth summit  
of south carolina

Palmetto Care Connections hosted the 2020 Summit virtually on October 9, 26 and 23.

**500+**  
PARTICIPANTS

**31** SPONSORS  
AND EXHIBITORS



The website was laid out beautifully, user-friendly, and visually appealing. Limiting the sessions to 30 minutes and providing a real-time chat during the sessions made the virtual summit a more dynamic experience and it was much easier to give my full and undivided attention to a shorter session.

2020 VIRTUAL SUMMIT SPONSOR/EXHIBITOR







I have attended many virtual conferences. This one was the best! Kathy and the team at PCC did a fantastic job. The format and agenda was one of the best with valuable info for all levels and types of topics. Job well done!



2020 VIRTUAL SUMMIT ATTENDEE

# virtualsummit

## telehealthawards winners



### National Telehealth Champion

Congressman James Clyburn



### State Telehealth Champion

James McElligott, MD, MSCR, Medical University of South Carolina and SC Telehealth Alliance



### Telehealth Advocate

Rick Foster, MD, retired executive, SC Hospital Association



### Telehealth Innovator

MUSC Tele-ICU and ICU Innovations Program:  
Dee W. Ford, MD, MSCR,  
Nandita Nadig, MD, MSCR  
and Edward Kilb, MD



### Telehealth Pioneer

Brenda Ratliff, MD,  
SC Department of Mental Health



### Telehealth Program of Excellence

McLeod Telehealth Team:  
Chris Moseley, Mike Hezerling,  
Webb McCall, Jeff Miles,  
Will Broach and Ashley Springs

A Conversation  
with the Federal  
Communications  
Commissioner

**BRENDAN CARR**  
FCC Commissioner



The Future  
of Virtual Care

**NICK PATEL, MD**  
Chief Digital Officer  
Vice Chair for Innovation  
and Clinical Affairs  
Prisma Health



Like STEEL  
in the Hour of Chaos:  
Power of Telehealth  
and Leadership in  
the Age of Pandemics  
and Social Unrest

**ANTON GUNN**  
MSW, CDM, CSP  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer  
937 Strategy Group



Adopting a New  
Workflow for  
Effective Care Delivery

**JUDD HOLLANDER,**  
MD  
Senior Vice President  
for Healthcare  
Delivery Innovation;  
Associate Dean  
for Strategic Health  
Initiatives, Sidney  
Kimmel Medical  
College; Vice Chair for  
Finance and Healthcare  
Enterprises, Department  
of Emergency  
Medicine, Thomas  
Jefferson University



  
**virtualsummit**  
keynote speakers + legislators



## CONGRESSMAN JAMES E. CLYBURN

US Congress Representing 6th District of South Carolina

**“For the 21st century, the next, next greatest thing (after electricity) is to have broadband in every home. We are not going to be able to efficiently and effectively deliver health care services throughout America without telehealth, and we know today that many rural communities are having to do telehealth visits by phone because people are not connected to the internet. We must do for the internet services what we did for electricity!”**



## UNITED STATES SENATOR TIM SCOTT

Serving South Carolina

**“Because of the pandemic, we saw the utilization of telehealth with primary physician appointments go from 0.1% in February (2020) to 49% in April (2020). If you don’t have that connectivity, you are missing out on the ability to keep yourself safe, at home, and not expose yourself to the virus. This is something we should all take very seriously and work aggressively towards solutions for those folks who are most vulnerable.”**



## REPRESENTATIVE GILDA COBB-HUNTER

SC House of Representatives Representing District 66

Orangeburg County

**“Patients and consumers should be reaching out to their members of the SC General Assembly to let them know how telehealth has been good for patients during the pandemic and how it has lent itself to the notion of safety and security... That is what telehealth has been able to do as a result of the pandemic.”**



## REPRESENTATIVE MURRELL G. SMITH

SC House of Representatives Representing District 67

Sumter County

**“We have been working on telehealth in SC for over a decade...What we saw as a result of this global pandemic is that telehealth has accelerated to the forefront... Reimbursements don’t need to go backwards...Here in SC, we have accelerated and loosened a lot of the restraints on telehealth and I don’t see us going backwards.”**



## SC SENATOR THOMAS ALEXANDER

Representing District 1

Oconee and Pickens Counties

**“Broadband has risen to the top of opportunities for us to try to address...What we saw after schools were suspended is that telehealth has been the springboard for us to have the opportunity of taking care of the citizens of our state in this time of COVID-19.”**



736 participants

# wednesday webinar

PRESENTED BY PALMETTO CARE CONNECTIONS



## webinar topics

- Telehealth Fraud and Abuse-Emerging Issues
- School-Based Telehealth
- COVID-19 Federal and State Telehealth Policy Update
- Rural Health Care Providers Using Telehealth During COVID-19
- Mental and Behavioral Care Providers Respond to COVID-19 Using Telehealth
- Implementing Telehealth in Skilled Nursing Facilities During COVID-19
- A Beginner's Guide to Telehealth During COVID-19

## webinar series with SCHA

Presented 4-Part Series in Partnership with South Carolina Hospital Association:

- Hospital Best Practices in Standing Up Telehealth During COVID-19
  - Beaufort Memorial Hospital
  - MUSC Health
  - Prisma Health
  - McLeod Health

# digital marketing and social media

monthly newsletter, webinars  
and e-mail promotions

**+681**

NEW CONTACTS

**1,565**

TOTAL CONTACTS

**14,797**

E-MAIL MARKETING OPENS

2020  
**Social Media  
increases**



**38%**  
more  
fans  
**75%**  
more  
reactions  
**60%**  
more  
shares  
**99%**  
more  
comments



**13%**  
more  
followers  
**5%**  
more  
likes  
**43%**  
more  
retweets



**49%**  
more  
followers  
**95%**  
more  
engagements







## education state+national advocacy

- Participated in two virtual meetings with Schools Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition (**SHLBC**) members and the Federal Communications Commission (**FCC**) to discuss the challenges with deadlines placed on health care providers during public health emergency, April 2020
- Participated in Center for Telehealth and E-Health Law (**CTel**) “Hill Day” virtual meetings with the offices of Congressman James Clyburn and Senator Lindsey Graham, June 16, 2020
- Met with **United States Senator Lindsey Graham** and medical professionals at the USC School of Medicine to discuss the benefits of telemedicine and broadband expansion throughout South Carolina, August 3, 2020



Mark Sweatman, MUSC; Kathy Schwarting, PCC; Senator Lindsey Graham; Meera Narasimhan, MD, DFAPA, USC School of Medicine; Ken Rogers, MD, SC Department of Mental Health; and Mark Wess, MD, Prisma Health.

- Interviewed **Congressman James Clyburn, United States Senator Tim Scott, SC Representatives Gilda Cobb-Hunter and Murrell Smith** about the current state and future of telehealth and broadband in SC Interviews compiled as legislative panel for Virtual Telehealth Summit, October 2020
- Engaged **SC Senator Thomas Alexander** and **Tom Allen**, Director of Safety, Transportation and Telecommunications at SC Office of Regulatory Staff (**ORS**) to discuss “Closing the SC Digital Divide” at Virtual Telehealth Summit, October 2020
- Engaged **Christian Soura**, South Carolina Hospital Association (**SCHA**) Vice President of Policy and Finance, to discuss “Telehealth Policy at the Federal and State Levels,” at Virtual Telehealth Summit, October 2020
- Participated in roundtable discussion with the CEO of the Universal Service Administrative Co., (**USAC**) **Radha Sekar**, December 2020





## presentations exhibits

- Exhibited at the **Behavioral Health Services Association** Conference on Broadband Telehealth and Managed Services, Myrtle Beach, February 2020
- Presented to **SC Legislative COVID-19 Public Education Committee**, June 11, 2020
  - Baseline SC Broadband Maps through PCC, SCHA, SCORH partnership
  - Telehealth and Education challenges during COVID-19 due to broadband barriers
  - Potential solutions to statewide broadband access and adoption
- Presented to **SC Primary Health Care Association** and its members (IT Staff) about ongoing telehealth services, broadband subsidies and one-time provisions available as a result of the pandemic, September 2020



## webinar appearances

- **"Broadband"**  
HBG Strategies, May 26, 2020
- **"Telehealth During COVID-19"**  
National Cooperative of Health Networks, May 19, 2020
- **"Debating South Carolina's Innovative Approach to Broadband Mapping"**  
hosted by House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn, June 23, 2020
- **"Broadband: Its Impact on Telehealth"**  
HBG Strategies, July 27, 2020
- **"The Impact of Telehealth in SC"**  
with James McElligott, MD for SC American Society for Health Care Risk Management and Association Healthcare Quality & SC Organization of Nurse Leaders, December 2020



## interviews

- South Carolina Public Radio broadcast with Thelisha Eaddy,  
**"Many Provide Online Events During Quarantine, But Like In Healthcare, Digital Deserts Block Access,"** April 9, 2020
- **"Taking the Pulse"** Nexsen Pruet Podcast, posted May 24, 2020
- **"Faces of 5G"** Emily Grimm, DCI Group, May 20, 2020
- **"Healthcare providers share experience using telehealth during pandemic"**  
video includes Bamberg Family Practice owner and board member Dr. Danette McAlhaney representing rural primary care, SCETV, May 14, 2020

# SC TELEHEALTH



Palmetto Care Connections launched a campaign, SC Loves Telehealth, to collect patient and provider telehealth testimonials in July 2020. Since then, PCC has partnered with the SC Telehealth Alliance to make this an ongoing initiative to assist with advocating for telehealth in SC.

**I was surprised at how smoothly my first telehealth experience went. I connected with my primary care doctor at Prisma Health using my laptop. My provider actually was able to spend more time with me than in my past face to face visits. I plan to use telehealth visits in the future whenever possible.**

MARSHALL MOODY, JR.



Telehealth is the best! I have heard about it now for a few years but never really thought I would/could benefit from it until, the pandemic. I had to have my prescriptions refilled and did not want to expose myself to anyone so I was offered the Telehealth service through my doctors office, Bamberg Family Practice. It was the easiest, smoothest visit. Very simple to get on with no issues, and I'm not very tech savvy. I will definitely use Telehealth in the future.

ANGIE SEASE

I first used telehealth this year and I was pleasantly surprised and how easy it was! From the convenience of staying home to the visit right at my fingertips, I hope to continue to use telehealth in the future!

CASSIDY HALL

Our family has benefited greatly from telehealth. My daughter has 4 therapy sessions per week, as well as the occasional appointment with various doctors and specialists. We are grateful that we have been able to continue all of her therapies, as well as follow through with appointments, in the safety of our home to lessen the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. Missing therapies and appointments during this uncertain time would be detrimental to my daughters growth and progress and we are so thankful to have it as an option.

JENNIFER ROBERT

**Prior to COVID I encountered many barriers to accessing clients and getting reimbursement for Telemental Health services. COVID legislation has removed some barriers. Now I have quicker access to clients and the telehealth services they need are.**

SHAMESHIA BENTON, LMSW, LISW-CP  
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