



IMPACT REPORT

*TRANSFORMATIVE &
DIGITAL SOLUTIONS*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Rural and underserved. Health Professional Shortage Areas. Medically Underserved Areas. Miles traveled. Time unrecovered. Missed appointments. Hospitals closing. Health Disparities. Millions of dollars lost.

South Carolina is home to more than 5 million people. It is filled with beaches, football, dirt roads, and opportunities. I was raised in a small town with less than 800 people. When I got married, I found myself in another small town that witnessed its hospital close about 15 years ago. Around this time, several leaders embarked on a journey to create Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) to increase access to care through telehealth utilization. Since 2010, PCC has provided telehealth education, training, and technical assistance to many healthcare providers across the great state of South Carolina. With our office located in Bamberg, we are proud to serve as a voice for rural and underserved communities to advocate for resources to promote health access.



Kathy Schwarting, MHA
Chief Executive Office, PCC
Co-Chair, SCTA

In 2015, PCC became the broadband consortium leader for South Carolina helping healthcare providers save \$72.2 Million. In this role, PCC can ensure the proper infrastructure is in place for telehealth adoption while saving millions of dollars for eligible entities such as rural health clinics, federally qualified health clinics, skill nursing facilities, and more.

In 2021, PCC expanded its reach to the patient community by launching Palmetto Connect, digital literacy trainings for South Carolina residents. More than 1,700 SC residents in 43 counties have completed the Palmetto Connect digital literacy training (including a telehealth mock visit).

Our team is so blessed to be a part of a movement dedicated to taking innovative steps to connect the unconnected. While we have made tremendous strides, there is still more work to be done. We could not have achieved so much without the support of our Board, Partners, SC Legislature, Stakeholders, Grant Funders, and Sponsors. Inside this report, you will see the impact Palmetto Care Connections has on digital and health transformation in South Carolina.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Chair
Family Practitioner, Owner
Bamberg Family Practice



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James McElligott, MD, MSCR
Executive Medical Director
MUSC Center for Telehealth
Co-Chair,
South Carolina Telehealth Alliance

IMPACT

AT A GLANCE



SUMMIT
264
ATTENDEES



\$72.2M
SC BROADBAND SAVINGS
SINCE 2013



WEBINAR
WEDNESDAY
415
REGISTRANTS



SINCE 2021
2,753
COMMUNITY
& CORPORATE
DIGITAL LITERACY
GRADUATES




11
STATES

NUMBER OF STATES IN
BROADBAND
CONSORTIUM



\$50K
GRANT FUNDING
AWARDED FOR
DIGITAL
LITERACY



\$137.8M
NATIONAL BROADBAND
SAVINGS



475
MANAGED IT
WORKSTATIONS



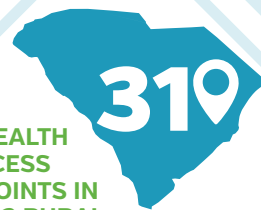
2,204
SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS



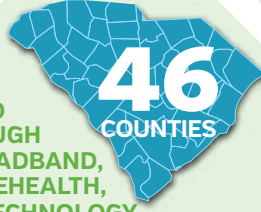
16,922
NEWSLETTER
VIEWS



87,098
WEBSITE VIEWS



319
TELEHEALTH
ACCESS
POINTS IN
12 RURAL
COUNTIES



46
COUNTIES
SERVED
THROUGH
BROADBAND,
TELEHEALTH,
TECHNOLOGY,
& EDUCATION



OUR VISION

Every South Carolinian is connected to healthcare services



OUR MISSION

To improve access to healthcare services in rural and underserved communities in South Carolina through telehealth, technology, broadband and education.



OUR VALUES

- Transform healthcare delivery
- Build trusted relationships
- Empower communities
- Create innovative solutions
- Promote local healthcare
- Improve access to care
- Advocate for all



OUR FOCUS AREAS

-  Technology
-  Broadband
-  Telehealth
-  Education

TELEHEALTH AND TELEMEDICINE MODERNIZATION ACT

Co-Chairmen of the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance Kathy Schwarting and Jimmy McElligott, MD, presented to a Senate Medical Affairs subcommittee in support of H. 4159, the Telehealth and Telemedicine Modernization Act. On March 11, 2024, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster signed the bill into law.



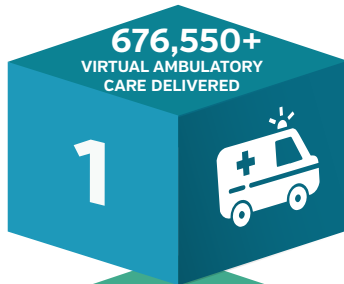
LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION



In partnership with MUSC Health and the South Carolina Telehealth Alliance, PCC hosted a dinner on May 7, 2024 for the House 3M Committee.

SCTA

The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) is a statewide collaboration of many organizations leading the way to expand telehealth services in South Carolina. The SCTA Advisory Council is co-chaired by James McElligott, MD, MSCR, Executive Medical Director of the Center for Telehealth, Medical University of South Carolina and Kathy Schwarting, MHA, Chief Executive Officer, Palmetto Care Connections.



SERVICE EXTENSION

Objective: All citizens of South Carolina will have equitable access to ambulatory care. Telehealth modalities will be used in the ambulatory setting to extend the reach of services that would otherwise be limited by travel and related barriers to care.



HOSPITALS SUPPORT

Objective: Every community hospital in our state will have access to telehealth partnerships that enhance its services and its finances.

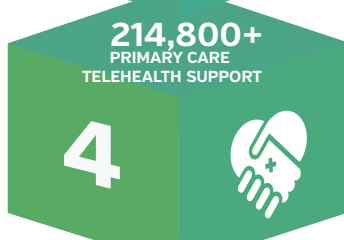
These Hospital Services represent partnerships that extend care between hospitals using telehealth with a focus of connecting resources from larger urban hospitals to community hospitals throughout the state.



CONVENIENT CARE

Objective: All citizens in South Carolina will have affordable and immediately available patient-initiated virtual urgent and other health system-entry level care from an in-state provider.

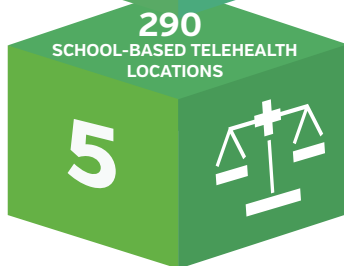
Convenient Care services are designed to engage individual patients through their own available devices in order to optimize utilization and maximize healthcare engagement.



PRIMARY CARE SUPPORT

Objective: All primary care clinics in the state, with emphasis on Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), will have access to integrated services through telehealth partnerships.

These services are intended to support the mission of the primary care clinic as a medical home, emphasizing the importance of local health care infrastructure while mitigating gaps in access to supporting resources.



HEALTH EQUITY

Objective: Targeted, novel initiatives will close the gap in access to health care services for high-priority health disparities.

Health Equity services will progress towards achieving health equity across the state in specifically identified areas of health disparity.

SUPPORT TACTICS FOR ALL 5 STRATEGIES

Broadband & Technology Infrastructure

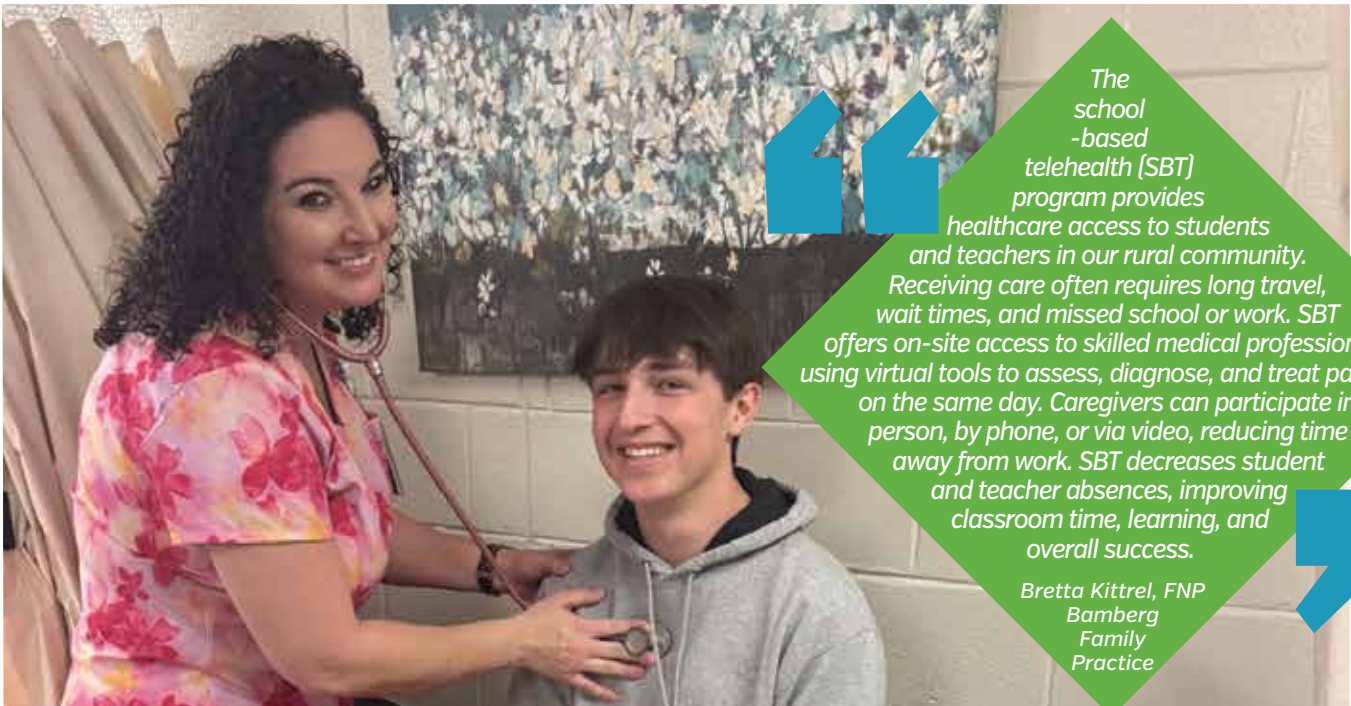
Training & Education

Research & Outcomes

Promotions & Awareness

Sustainability

TELEHEALTH SUCCESS STORY



“ The school-based telehealth (SBT) program provides healthcare access to students and teachers in our rural community. Receiving care often requires long travel, wait times, and missed school or work. SBT offers on-site access to skilled medical professionals using virtual tools to assess, diagnose, and treat patients on the same day. Caregivers can participate in person, by phone, or via video, reducing time away from work. SBT decreases student and teacher absences, improving classroom time, learning, and overall success. ”

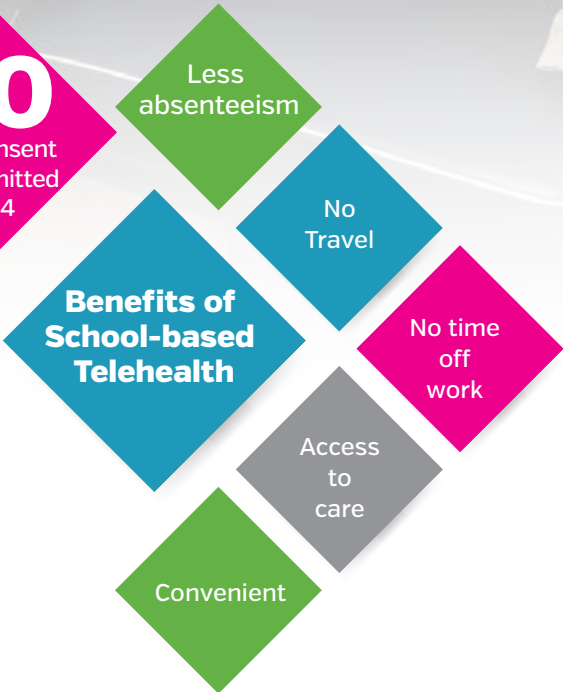
Bretta Kittrel, FNP
Bamberg Family Practice

While at school, Joshua, a high school junior, began experiencing discomfort in his toe. It was noticeably red and showing signs of infection. The school nurse contacted his mother, who tried to schedule an appointment with Joshua’s podiatrist, only to find out the doctor would be out of the office for a week. At that point, the school nurse suggested a school-based telehealth visit. Both Joshua and his mother agreed to use telehealth. In less than an hour, Joshua was evaluated by a healthcare provider and prescribed an antibiotic.

“ As a working parent, telehealth has been incredibly beneficial. I no longer have to worry about taking time off from work or making major adjustments to my schedule for a doctor’s visit. The ability to stay informed about my child’s health remotely gives me peace of mind, and I feel more involved in their care even when I can’t physically be there. Overall, it’s made managing my child’s health much more efficient and less stressful. ”

Celia Corbin
Parent

120
Student Consent
Forms Submitted
Fall 2024



TELEHEALTH ACCESS POINTS

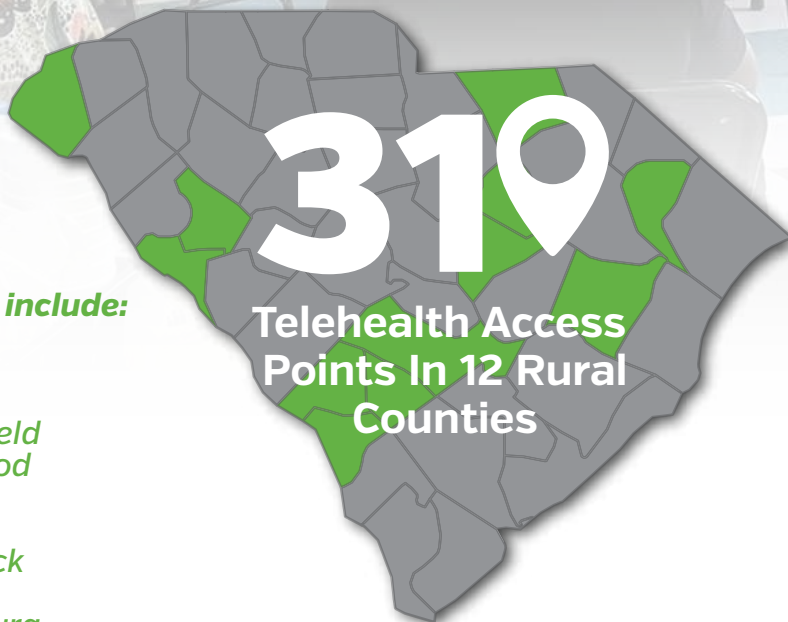
Connecting Communities to Health, Education, Jobs, Church, Family, and More

Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Rural Health Network Development grant provided \$900,000 in federal funding over 4 years to develop a Virtual Access Telehealth Network allowing our team to expand health care access for rural residents. This funding allowed PCC to establish telehealth access points in community centers where residents tend to congregate such as churches, libraries, schools, and more.



The South Carolina Department on Aging has been proud to partner with Palmetto Care Connections over the past few years. This collaboration has helped us achieve our goal of connecting rural and underserved seniors in South Carolina to quality healthcare services through broadband and telehealth initiatives. Kathy and her team are deeply committed to their mission, and they have significantly impacted the lives of many older adults by providing them with opportunities to access quality healthcare.

Director
Connie Munn
SC Dept. On
Aging



Counties include:

- Allendale
- Bamberg
- Barnwell
- Chesterfield
- Greenwood
- Lee
- Marion
- McCormick
- Oconee
- Orangeburg
- Sumter
- Williamsburg

Telehealth Access
Points In 12 Rural
Counties

Telehealth Access Points

-  Church
-  Library
-  Pharmacy
-  School
-  Senior Center
-  Local Agency

TELEHEALTH



WELL + CONNECTSC

Established through multiple COVID-19 grants, WellConnectSC allows health care providers access to one platform for any type of telehealth consult.



A patient with an A1C of 14% dropped to 7.0% within three months after a visit with her endocrinologist. She found the RPM platform and equipment easy to use, with sufficient onboarding to manage her diabetes independently. She says it's great knowing she has someone devoted to helping her conquer diabetes.

Yolanda Green, MSN, RN
Clemson Rural Health



- ✓ Diabetes Prevention
- ✓ Remote Patient Monitoring
- ✓ Postpartum Care Support
- ✓ Nutrition Counseling
- ✓ Pregnancy Support
- ✓ Hypertension Support
- ✓ Cooking Class
- ✓ Chronic Kidney Disease Outcome Improvement Program
- ✓ Congestive Heart Failure
- ✓ Behavioral Health
- ✓ Diabetes Management
- ✓ High-Risk Pregnancy Support Program

Types of Services Provided by the Platform



WELLCONNECTSC GOALS

1 Enhancing Healthcare Accessibility

7 Health Care Providers

2 Improving Health Equity

733 Patients

3 Unlimited Usage

Telehealth Platform

4 Efficient Chronic Disease Management

40% Patients' reduction in A1C and Blood Pressure

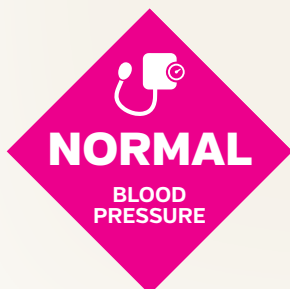
Since 2017, Mrs. Bamberg struggled to control her Type 2 Diabetes. However, in September 2024, she achieved her A1c goal of <7 with the help of a Chronic Care Management (CCM) team and Palmetto Care Connections' Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) programs. Through her dedication and support from her care team, she's also maintained normal blood pressure and lost 12 pounds.

Mrs. Bamberg stays connected with her CCM team monthly and participates in the RPM program, tracking her blood pressure, heart rate, blood sugar, and weight. She regularly communicates with her RPM nurse, Kamryn, for feedback and guidance.

This close communication has been key to her success. She credits her team with improving her quality of life, helping her manage medications, and providing support she wouldn't have otherwise. Her motivation comes from a deep sense of responsibility to care for her sick husband, inspiring her to stay healthy. Family and friends admire her progress, and she believes consistent effort truly makes a difference.

Mrs. Bamberg's story underscores the importance of connection and support in managing chronic conditions, inspiring others to take control of their health.

SUCCESSES





*The
Managed
IT Services
that Palmetto
Care Connections has
provided to our hospital
has been a game changer.
They have been instrumental in
keeping the environment running
efficiently and securely while quickly
responding to service issues when they
arise. We have been able to maintain
the same high level IT support
that larger hospitals enjoy
at a fraction of the cost.*



*Lari Gooding, MBA
Allendale
County
Hospital*



MANAGED IT SOLUTIONS

EVERY
** **39**
SECONDS A
CYBER ATTACK
OCCURS

* **35%** OF ALL
ATTACKS ARE
RANSOMWARE



MANAGED
BACKUP



PROACTIVE
PREVENTATIVE
MAINTENANCE



1,030
SECURITY PATCHES
AUTOMATICALLY
INSTALLED



MANAGED
SECURITY



INCREASED
PRODUCTIVITY



1,348
PHISHING ATTACKS &
MALICIOUS SITES
BLOCKED



475
WORKSTATIONS



24/7
ADVANCED
PERFORMANCE
MONITORING



REDUCED
BUSINESS
IMPACT



* **40%** OF ALL
EMAIL THREATS
ARE PHISHING
ATTACKS



15
HEALTH
CARE
LOCATIONS

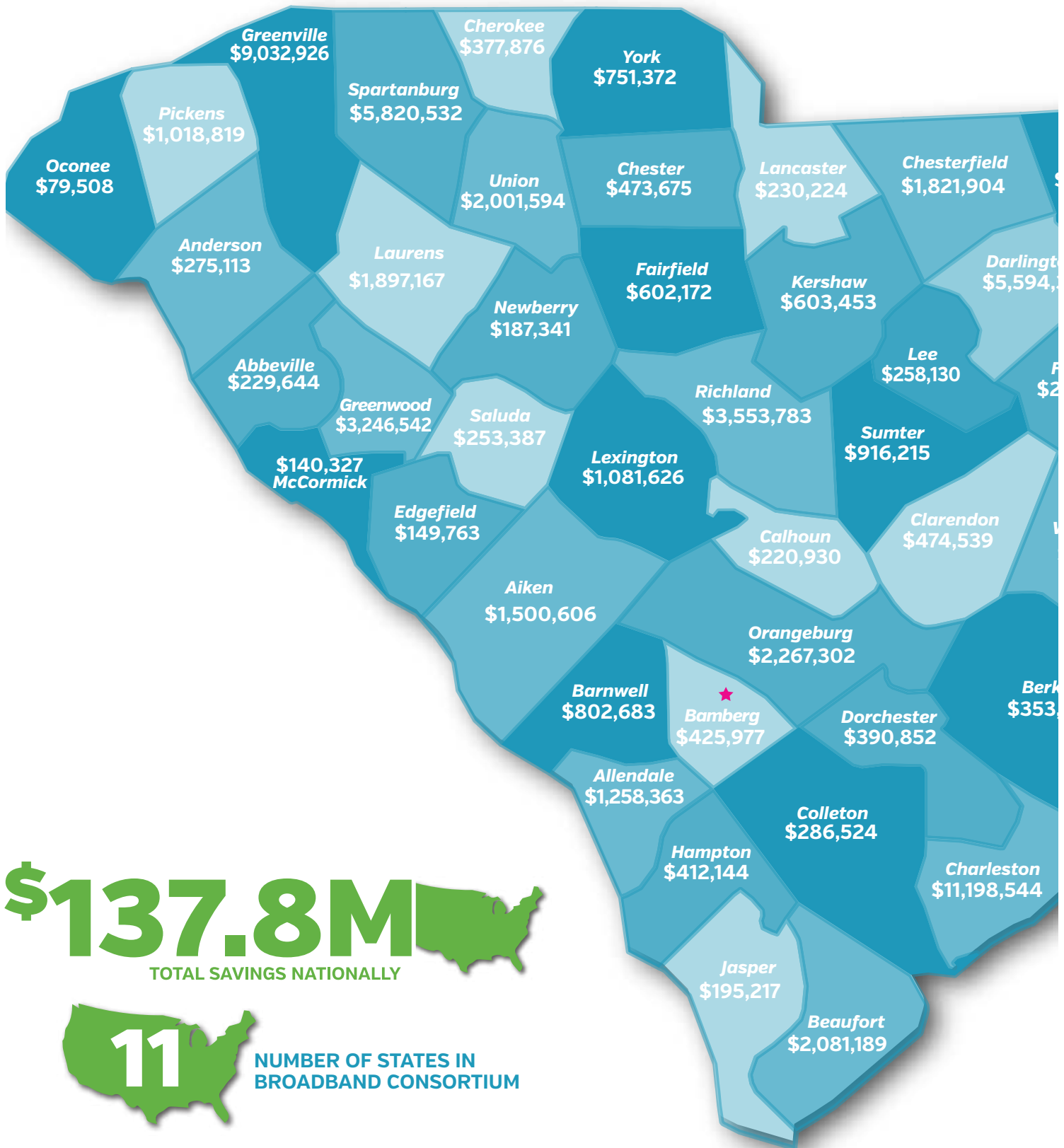


** **2,244**
CYBER ATTACKS
OCCUR IN A
DAY

*Source Sentinel One **Source University of Maryland

BROADBAND SAVINGS

As the leader of the South Carolina Broadband Consortium (also known as PSPN), Palmetto Care Connections assists eligible health care providers in applying for broadband savings through the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund Program.



South Carolina

Thanks to the Universal Service Fund

\$72.2 Million

in Broadband Savings in South Carolina since 2013

\$500K

One Critical Access Hospital in South Carolina

\$21M

South Carolina FQHCs

\$2M

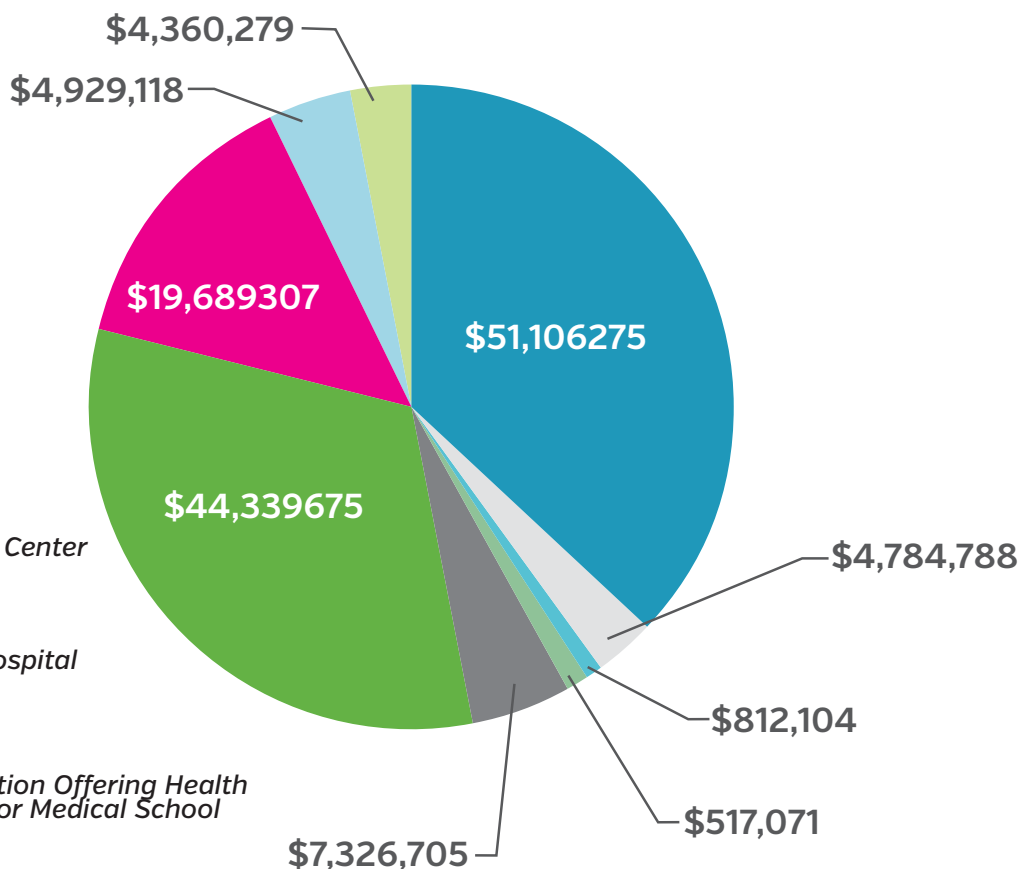
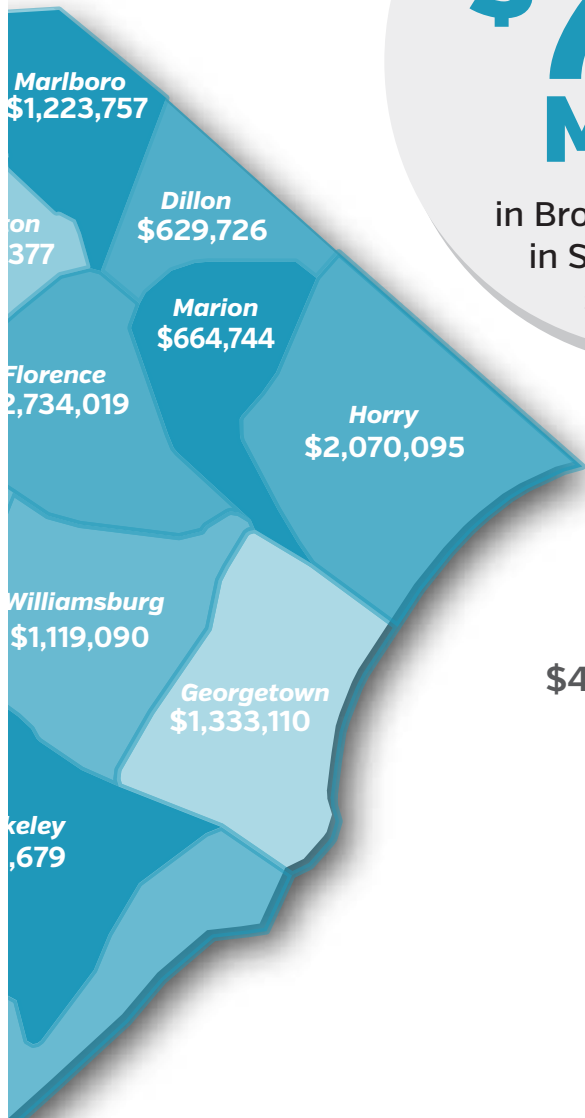
South Carolina Rural Health Clinics

\$2M

South Carolina Mental/Behavioral Health

\$879K

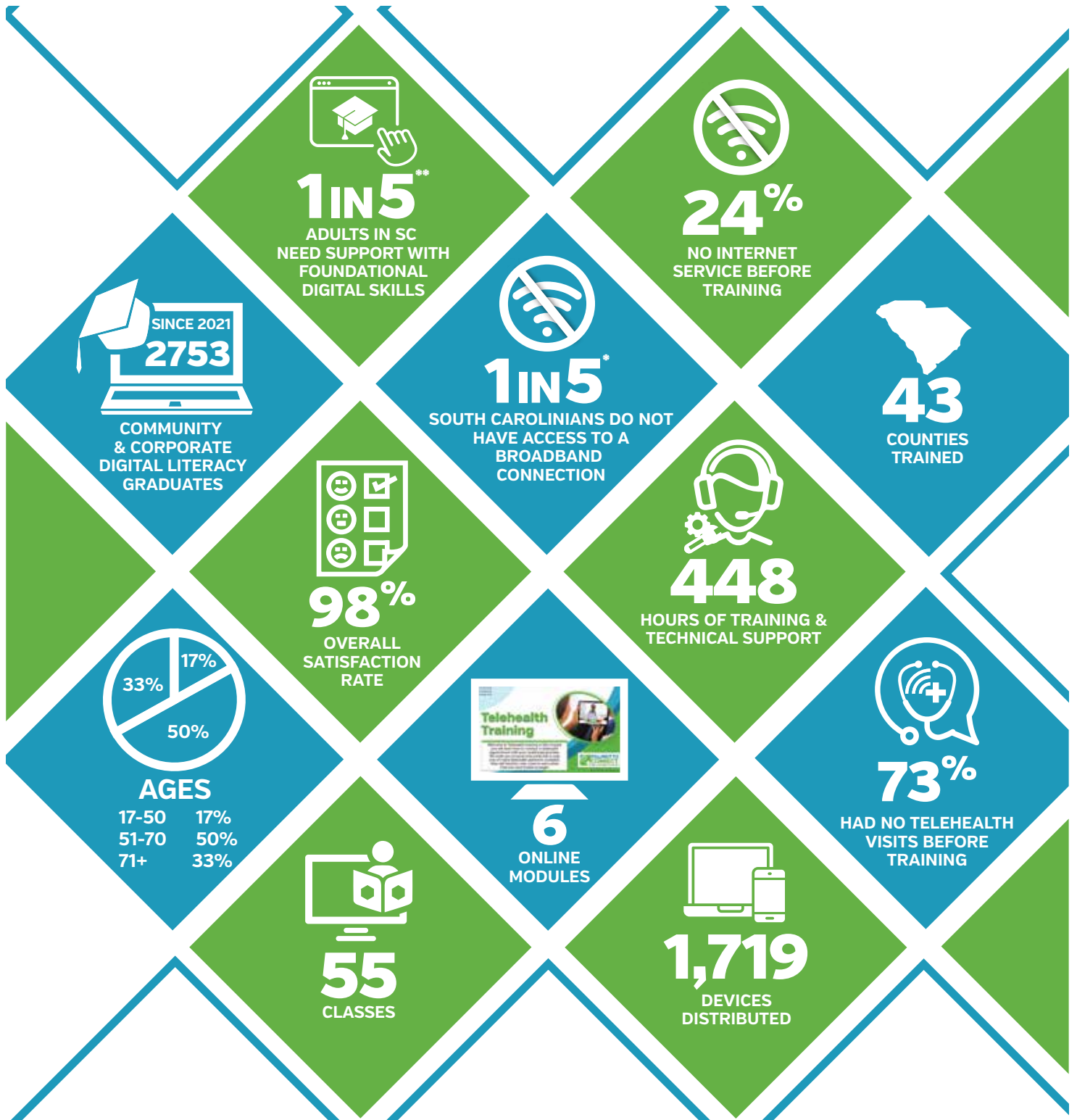
South Carolina hardware or infrastructure savings



- Community Health Center or Health Center Providing Health Care To Migrants
- Community Mental Health Center
- Dedicated ER Of Rural, For-Profit Hospital
- Local Health Department or Agency
- Not-For-Profit Hospital
- Post-Secondary Educational Institution Offering Health Care Instruction, Teaching Hospital or Medical School
- Other
- Rural Health Clinic
- Skilled Nursing Facility

CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Palmetto Care Connections provides digital literacy training, digital devices, assistance with accessing affordable internet solutions, online content, and technical support. Launched in 2021, PCC has hosted 55 classes providing training to 2,753 individuals in the community (1,719) and corporate (1,034) settings.



*Connect the Future SC **Adult Literacy and Learning Impact Network

CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Palmetto Care Connections received funding from the SC Department of Health and Human Services to increase digital and health literacy to Medicaid recipients in South Carolina. This partnership supports the state's ongoing efforts to reduce healthcare disparities and improve overall health outcomes.



CLOSING THE **DIGITAL DIVIDE**

COMCAST DIGITAL CONNECTOR GRANT



Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) was awarded a \$20,000 grant to expand digital navigation services in Hampton County. PCC held four digital literacy trainings at the local library to assist participants with internet connectivity, telehealth training, health literacy, internet safety, and more.



We're so grateful for our trusted partnership with PCC. Their team brings innovation, insight and heart to everything they do, and we've been proud to work together on multiple grants through Rural LISC from Truist Foundation, Microsoft and Comcast, to increase digital skills and computer access across South Carolina. PCC is really leading the way."

Christa Vinson, Director
Digital Equity &
Strategic
Partnerships



PCC AWARDED DIGITAL EDUCATION GRANT

\$25K
SALUDA COUNTY



\$25K
ORANGEBURG COUNTY



100
PARTICIPANTS
& DEVICES

CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

In collaboration with Family Solutions, a program of the SC Office of Rural Health, and with funding from Absolute Total Care, PCC provided digital and health literacy training to pregnant women to improve maternal health in South Carolina. Each participant who completed the online training received a free tablet and 12 months of internet service at no cost. The training consisted of learning how to navigate online patient portals, research medical information, and conduct a telehealth visit, all while practicing internet safety.

SUCCESS STORY

Latasha King, a mother, community health worker, and student, embraced digital learning through PCC's digital literacy class. What started as a requirement to receive a free tablet quickly became a game-changer.

"We had to take the course to get the tablet, but learning how to be digitally literate was incredibly helpful," Latasha shared. The step-by-step instruction ensured everyone, regardless of experience, could confidently use the technology.

For Latasha, mastering basic tablet functions was essential—not just for herself but for her community, including older adults and individuals with cognitive challenges. Her daughter, now two, also benefited from the tablet, using it for learning and telehealth appointments.

Beyond personal use, Latasha applied her skills in the workforce and with her clients, recognizing technology's power in overcoming healthcare barriers. "I've had clients use it for telehealth, which was a huge help for those with transportation challenges," she explained.

Latasha's journey highlights the impact of digital education in fostering confidence, accessibility, and empowerment. Thanks to PCC, she and her community are thriving in the digital age.



139

TABLETS
DISTRIBUTED



97%

FAMILY SOLUTIONS
SATISFACTION
RATE



54%

HAD NO TELEHEALTH
VISITS BEFORE
TRAINING



4%

NO INTERNET
BEFORE
TRAINING



TELEHEALTH EDUCATION

PCC has created several resources (videos, flyers, and online trainings) available online to guide patients on their digital journey.

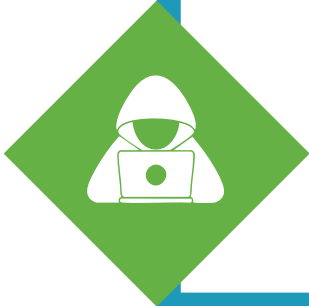
FOR PATIENTS



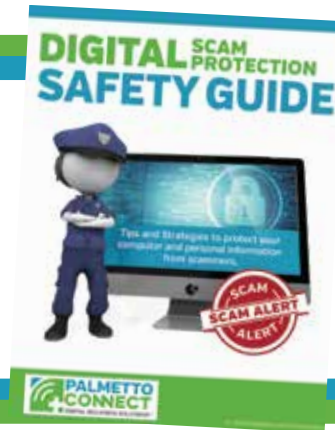
TELEHEALTH tidbits FOR PATIENTS



Patient Telehealth Checklist



Digital Scam Protection Safety Guide



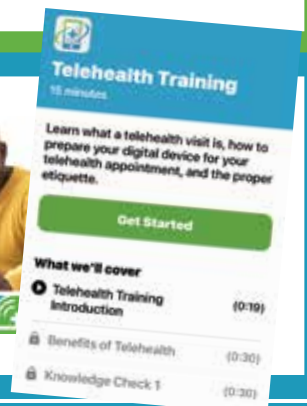
the Telehealth Times



E-LEARNING

Learn Anywhere, at Anytime!

Palmetto Care Connections offers E-Learning Digital Literacy Online programs that teach you about the basics of telehealth, healthcare literacy, internet security, and email.



TELEHEALTH EDUCATION FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

PCC hosts online and in-person trainings, awareness events, and an Annual Summit to provide updates and networking opportunities.

WEBINAR WEDNESDAY



415
REGISTRANTS

12TH ANNUAL TELEHEALTH SUMMIT OF SOUTH CAROLINA



264
ATTENDEES



TELEHEALTH AWARENESS WEEK September 15-21, 2024



122
ACTIVE
VIEWERS



THE CONNECT A PUBLICATION OF PCC



16,922
EMAIL/
NEWSLETTER
OPENS

GRAND OPENING



COMMUNITY EVENTS



52+
COMMUNITY
EVENTS

12TH ANNUAL TELEHEALTH SUMMIT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Palmetto Care Connections hosted the 12th Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina on October 28-30, 2024, at the Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa. The Summit brings together health care champions and community leaders dedicated to improving access to care through innovative digital solutions. From learning to networking, 264 attendees, 56 speakers, and 27 sponsors enjoyed 24 sessions in 33 hours.

264
ATTENDEES

27
SPONSORS

56
SPEAKERS

24
SESSIONS



DIAMOND SPONSOR

- SC TELEHEALTH ALLIANCE

PLATINUM SPONSORS

- MCLEOD HEALTH
- MUSC HEALTH
- PRISMA HEALTH
- SC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- SC DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
- SEGRA

GOLD SPONSORS

- BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF SC
- PFIZER

NETWORKING RECEPTION SPONSORS

- CARIUM
- IRON BOW
- PEXIP

SILVER SPONSORS

- ABSOLUTE TOTAL CARE
- CLEMSON RURAL HEALTH
- SC EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
- SC PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION
- SPECTRUM

BRONZE SPONSORS

- DOXY.ME
- HICUITY HEALTH
- SHRINERS CHILDREN'S
- SOUTH CAROLINA AHEC
- SOUTH CAROLINA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
- SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH
- SOUTHEASTERN TELEHEALTH RESOURCE CENTER
- UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
- WELVISTA

SNACK SPONSOR

- HILLSOUTH IT SOLUTIONS

Thank You

TELEHEALTH AWARD WINNERS



2024 State Telehealth Legislative Champion

The Honorable
Sylleste H. Davis
South Carolina House
of Representatives



2024 Telehealth State Champion

Patrick Cawley, MD, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
Medical University
of South Carolina



2024 Telehealth Pioneer

Robert Bank, MD
State Director
SC Department
of Mental Health



2024 Telehealth Trailblazer

Caitlin Moore, MS, APRN, FNP-C
Associate Director,
Clinical Operations
Clemson
Rural Health



2024 Telehealth Program of Excellence

iCare Program



2024 Telehealth Innovator

Dominic Gault, MD
Prisma Health



2024 Telehealth Technology Champion

Matt Hiatt, MSITM, PMP
Chief Technology Officer
Palmetto Care
Connections



2024 Dr. Rick Foster Primary Care Telehealth Champion

Danette McAlhane, MD
Owner and Family Practitioner
Bamberg Family Practice

POSTER AWARD WINNERS

Project
FAM: Discreet
Food Insecurity
Screening in a Rural
Pediatric Clinic with
Resource Sharing

Christy Irons, DNP, FNP-BCAPRN;
Bonnie Treado, DNP, MS, FNP-C, APRN;
Brooke Brittain, MS, RD, LD, CHES, CLC;
Chad Treado, EdD
Deanna Hiott, PhD, RN
Anderson University

Programmatic
Poster Winner

Emergency
Department
Utilization by South
Carolina Patients with
Type 2 Diabetes: A
Needs Assessment to Inform
Primary Care Access and
Telehealth Improvement

Beverly W. Holmes, DHA, MSW
Medical University of South Carolina
Cooperative Health

Scientific
Poster Winner

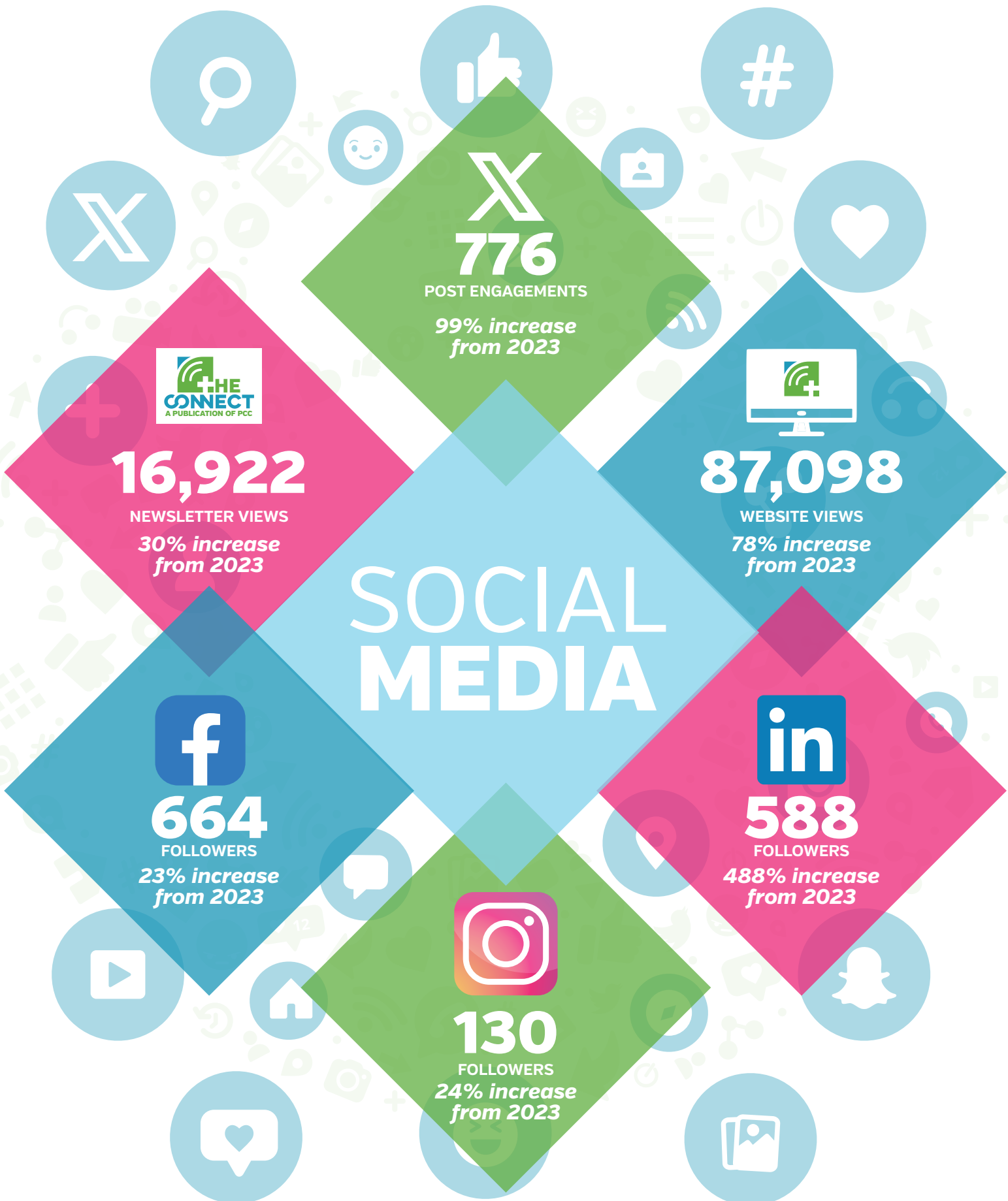
Community
Paramedicine:
How a Rural Primary Care
Office and an EMS Agency are
Working Toward Redefining
Healthcare Delivery in South Carolina

Graham Simms, NRP, CP-C
First Priority Mobile Healthcare
Fairfield Medical Associates

People's Choice
Poster Winner

TRAININGS & OUTREACH





SOCIAL MEDIA



1880 Main Highway | Bamberg, SC 29003
803.245.2672 | www.palmettocareconnections.org

