Telehealth: *Improving Care, Extending Access*

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Telehealth: Helping Sophia grow up in good health
Telehealth connects doctors to patients at a distance – and much more
A rapidly growing ability to connect to patients

- **Who?** Doctor, patient, advice nurse, community health worker
- **When?** Real time – synchronous OR Batched – store and forward, asynchronous
- **Where?** Originally rural Now increasingly urban
- **How?** Tablets, smart phones, wearables (wristwatches, shirts, patches)

*NB: All examples of products and services are provided for illustration only. The speaker and UCLA have no financial relationship with products cited.*
The rapid rise of telehealth – a response to demand from doctors and patients

Source: American Telemedicine Association Estimate, 2014
The military are the largest users of telemedicine nationally, with the Veterans Administration a close second.

- Favorable policies for
- Home telehealth
- Mental and behavioral health
- Licensure portability
- Mobile support apps

- Careful, focused evaluation and rapid deployment
Why is telehealth spreading so rapidly?

- The technology is simpler, easier to use, more visual

- Patients and consumer demand play a key role:
  - Snap pictures of a surgical incision as it heals
  - Respond to talking medication reminders, text messages
  - Even “gamification” and incentives that spur healthy behaviors

- Research confirms the safety and effectiveness of telehealth solutions

- Telehealth makes care more convenient, timely, and affordable
Telehealth also collects monitoring information

- Veterans Administration is monitoring more than 300,000 veterans in their homes for more than 30 conditions:
  - Diabetes
  - Congestive Health Failure
  - COPD
  - Depression
  - PTSD

- This saves more than $10,000 / year for each patient, and keeps them healthy and out of the hospital

- Nationally, if we used remote monitoring for just Congestive Heart Patients (CHF) who need it, we would save an estimated $6.4 Billion – and most of these patients are Medicare beneficiaries
In-home monitoring is growing, but not fast enough!

Medicaid leads:
- 18 state Medicaid plans cover home telehealth (video)
- 12 state Medicaid plans cover remote patient monitoring
- Consistently better health outcomes and cost savings

Multiple Applications:
- Skilled nursing
- Mental and behavioral health
- Telerehabilitation
- Pregnancy care and monitoring
- Long term care
- Hospital discharge care
- Chronic disease management
A growing national solution for cost and access

- **Telehealth** is a major part of the answer for
  - Barriers of time and distance
  - Professional shortages
  - Disparities in access to care
  - Quality of care
  - Hospital readmits, ER overuse
  - Costs of delivery
  - Convenience and patient choice

- But – “**we can’t practice two kinds of medical care: one for those who can access telehealth, and the other for patients who don’t yet have access.**”

  *Dr. Mark Grossman, of UCLA Medical Group*
Helping primary care physicians diagnose disease:

AskMD from Sharecare.com
Putting the Physician’s Office in a Smartphone

- Differential diagnosis tool
- Robust symptom checker
- Personalized consultation

Based on pattern recognition decision support engine founded by Dr. Larry Weed.
Telehealth allows nurses and clinical aides to connect remotely for daily supervision – with remarkable results

- **Clinic in Houston**
  - 2/3 of visits could be cared for by Grand-Aide with a Nurse Supervisor
    - Top 5: Rash, fever, congestion, earache, cough

- **Emergency Department in rural Virginia**
  - 3/4 of visits could be cared for by Grand-Aide with a Nurse Supervisor
    - Top 5: Earache, congestion, cough, rash, pharyngitis.

- **Readmissions prevented with in-home tablet use by Grand-Aide**
  - Reduction in 30-day readmissions of 25%-50% (35%)

- **Expenses dropped**
  - Grand-Aides cost $15-20 per visit
And the future for telehealth lies in supporting consumers and patients in managing their own health –

“Patient engagement is the block-buster drug of the twenty-first century.”    Dave Chase, Forbes
ATA Federal and State Policy Resources

• ATA Policy and Priorities
• State Policy Toolkit
• State Legislative Matrix
• State Internet Prescribing Matrix
• State Policy Checklist
• ATA HUB
• ATA Wiki

State Medicaid Best Practices:

✓ Telemental and Behavioral Health
✓ Remote Patient Monitoring and Home Video Visits
✓ Store-and-Forward Telemedicine
✓ School-Based Telehealth
✓ Managed Care
✓ Telestroke
✓ High-risk Pregnancy
✓ Telerehabilitation