

Department of Health Management and Policy

Advocating for Policy Change to Support Expansion of Broadband Access

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March 21, 2024

Objectives

- 1) To understand the role that broadband access can play in cancer prevention and control.
- 2) To use data to advocate for policy change for broadband access.
- 3) To identify partners and policy levers for broadband access.

Broadband Basics

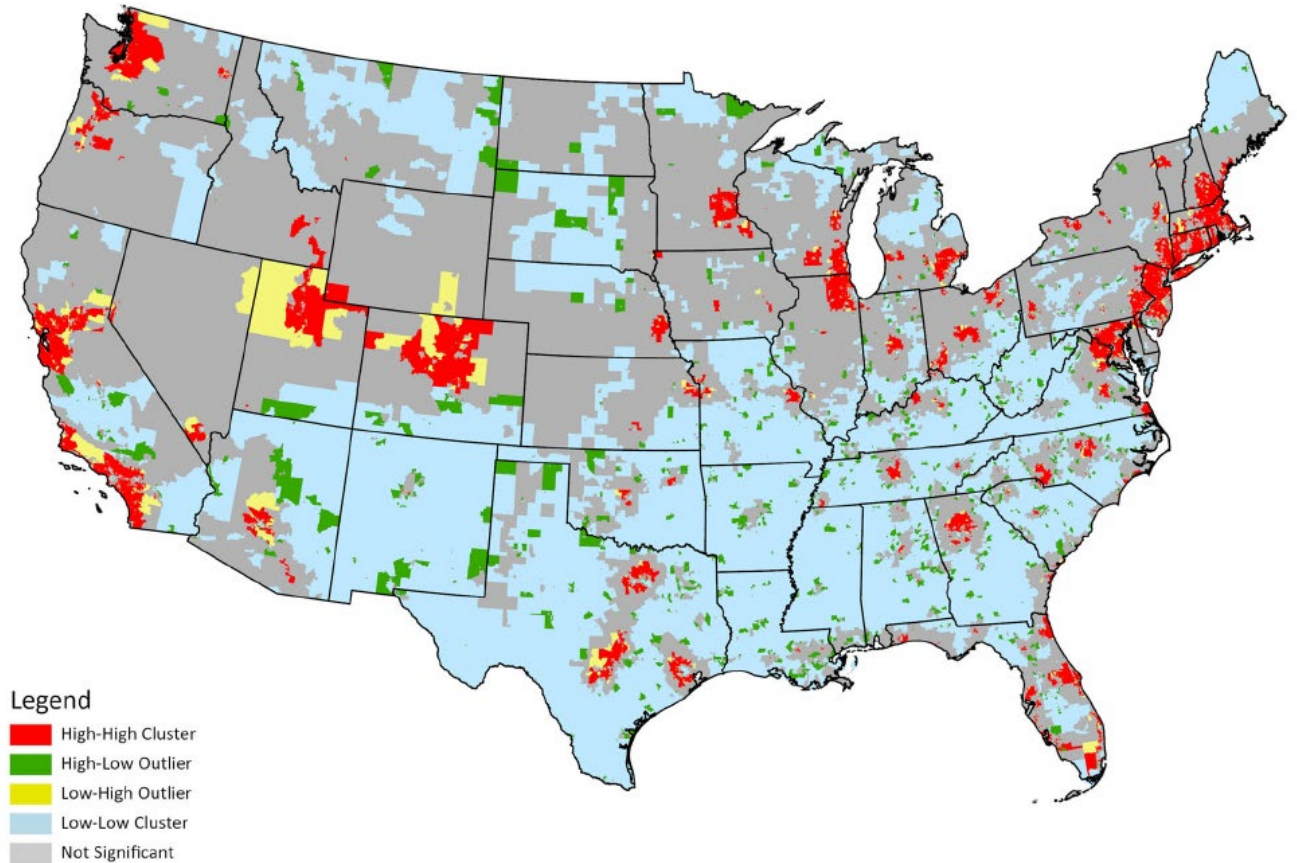


What is broadband?

- *Historically*, the broadband benchmark-25 Mb/sec download and 3 Mb/sec upload speed capabilities
 - Perspective: time to upload a 5 minute Youtube video (40 Mb)-1 minute and 51 seconds
- [As of March 14, 2024](#), the broadband benchmark has increased to 100 Mb/sec download and 20 Mb/sec upload speeds
 - Perspective: time to upload a 5 minute HD video (40 Mb)-16 seconds
- Has been deemed a “super determinant of health”

How does broadband access vary across locations and populations?

- Census tracts with low access tended to:
 - Be more rural
 - Have higher percentages of Black, Hispanic, or American Indian/Alaska Native populations
 - Have higher percentages of people living in poverty



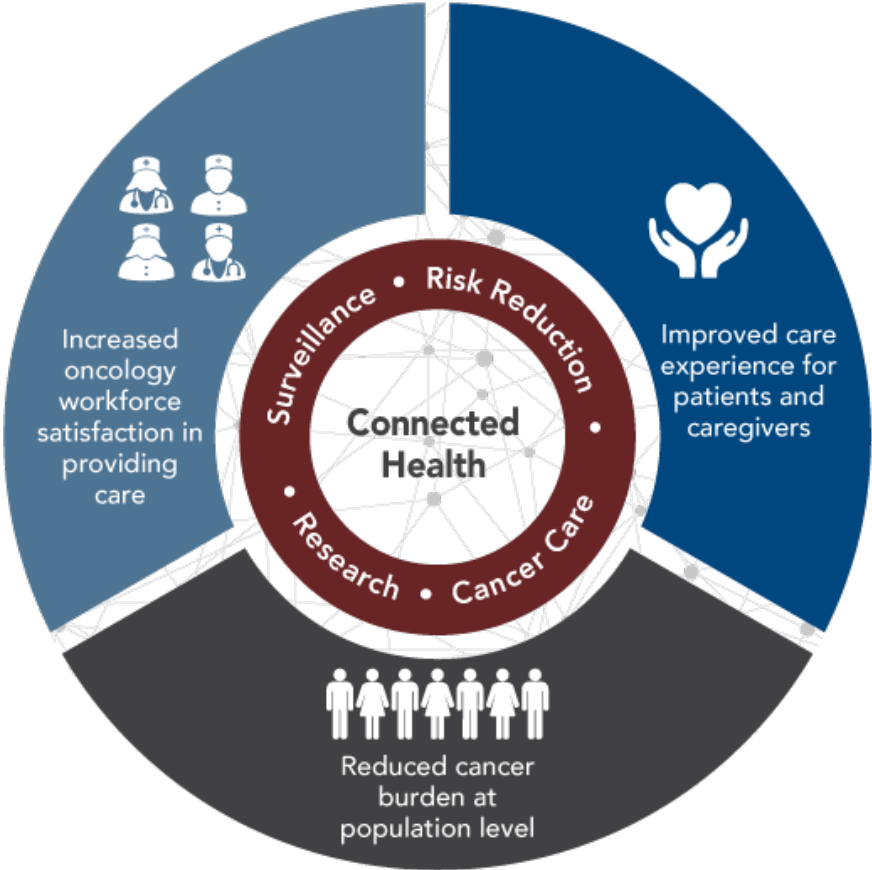
Source: [Zahnd et al, JRH 2022](#)

Broadband Access and Cancer Care



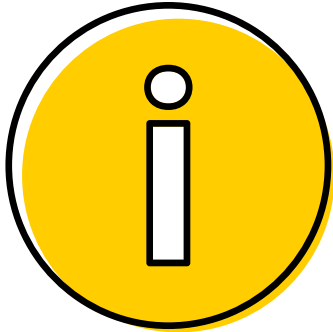
President's Cancer Panel

- 2016-Improve cancer-related outcomes with Connected Health
 - Objective: Facilitate health information access and sharing by ensuring adequate Internet access



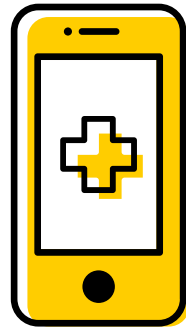
FCC-NCI Broadband Cancer Collaboration

Broadband Access, Telehealth, and Cancer Care



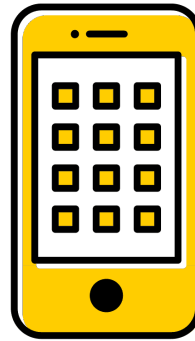
Accessing cancer-related information

~80% of cancer survivors access cancer information (data through 2018)



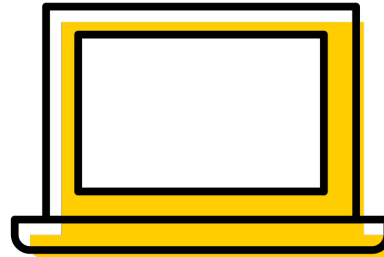
Telehealth virtual visits

Between Jan 2020 and April 2020, half of cancer patients had a telehealth visit



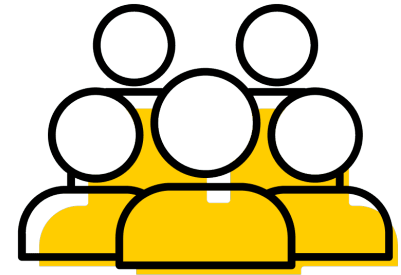
Remote patient monitoring/Mhealth

Mhealth technology are frequently used for symptom and medication tracking



Patient portal access

Cancer patients/survivor may use portals to access lab or other results



“Project ECHO”

A hub-and-spoke knowledge-sharing network to do virtual clinics between primary care and specialists

An illustration of three server racks. The central rack is the tallest and contains six server units, each with a white indicator light on the left and three status lights on the right. The left and right racks are shorter and contain four server units each. A yellow rectangular label with the text 'Data Sources' is positioned in the middle of the left rack.

Data Sources

Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS)

- Regularly conducted survey focused on accessing health information and other topics:
 - Broadband access
 - Use of telehealth (virtual visits, mHealth, remote patient monitoring)
 - Use of the internet for accessing cancer information
 - Trust in information from different sources
- [HINTS Briefs](#)



Patterns and Predictors of Telehealth Use among US Adults in 2022

Telehealth refers to the use of telecommunications technology to deliver health care, health information, and health education. Triaging patients to the appropriate level of care via telehealth can increase the efficient use of health care resources and decrease health care system costs. For patients, the use of telehealth can improve access to care (particularly in rural areas), lower health care-related costs (e.g., those associated with transportation and time off work), make care more convenient, and increase satisfaction with health care services. Research also shows that telehealth yields outcomes that are comparable to in-person care.

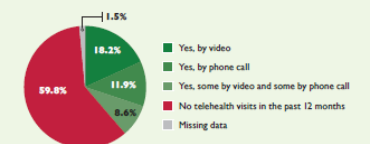
Despite the promise of telehealth, the integration and uptake of these services in health care remained moderate for many years due to unfavorable reimbursement policies, regulatory barriers, and limited motivation to implement alternatives to in-person care. This changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated a rapid shift to telehealth in order to reduce virus transmission and prompted policy changes to address some of the long-standing barriers to telehealth. Many studies have documented the significant rise in telehealth visits that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, and although levels of telehealth use have since declined, they remain above pre-pandemic levels, suggesting that telehealth will remain an important model of care delivery going forward.

The widespread use of telehealth services during the pandemic also illuminated some key challenges, including technical difficulties that can make telehealth visits ineffective or frustrating, concerns related to health information privacy and data security, and the inequitable uptake of telehealth services. There are concerns that telehealth might exacerbate disparities among patients who have limited access to the necessary technology or lack the skills needed to navigate telehealth services. These barriers tend to have a disproportionate effect on rural residents, racial/ethnic minority groups, older adults, and people of lower socioeconomic status—some of the same populations who already experience significant disparities in health outcomes.

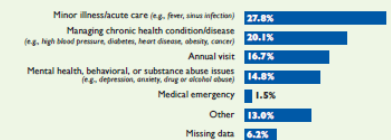
Quick Facts

- Telehealth refers to the use of telecommunications technology to deliver health care, health information, and health education.
- The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a rapid expansion in the use of telehealth.
- Telehealth offers many potential benefits to patients and health care organizations, including lower health care costs, improved access to care, and greater convenience.
- The use of telehealth has the potential to exacerbate disparities among populations who may have limited access to or comfort with technology, including rural residents, racial/ethnic minority groups, older adults, and people of lower socioeconomic status.

Percentage of Americans who reported receiving care from a doctor or health professional using telehealth in the past 12 months



Primary reason for most recent telehealth visit among those who reported a telehealth visit in the past 12 months



Source: HINTS 6 data (collected March 7–Nov. 8, 2022)

This HINTS® Brief examines prevalence of, and disparities in, telehealth utilization among US adults.

Broadband Access Data

- [American Community Survey](#)
 - Broadband adoption
- [Federal Communications Commission National Broadband Map](#) (Data from broadband access providers)
 - Service Type (e.g., residential)
 - Technology (fixed or mobile)
 - Speed

Broadband Speed Data

- [BroadbandNow](#)
 - Consumer resource that pulls together data from local internet service providers
 - Includes the following:
 - Provider counts
 - Minimum and maximum speeds
 - DSL, Cable, Fiber, and Fixed Wireless

Broadband Funding Data

- [National Telecommunications and Information Administration\(NTIA\) Public GIS Data](#)
 - Connecting Minority Communities
 - Middle Mile
 - Tribal
 - BEAD
 - Broadband Infrastructure
 - Digital Equity
 - Permitting

Qualitative and Quantitative Data

Groups to Engage

- Cancer patients
- Cancer Survivors
- Patients
- Providers

Data Collection Approaches

- Key informant interviews
- Listening sessions
- Focus groups
- Small-scale surveys

Questions to Explore

- Barriers
- Facilitators
- Experiences

Stories





Policy Levers and Partners

Policy Levers-Federal

- Funding
 - Infrastructure
 - Adoption
- Measurement and mapping of broadband access
 - [Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\) Program](#)

News

Broadband map holds the key to how much federal funding states will get to expand internet service

Harvest Public Media | By Katie Peikes
Published January 7, 2023 at 4:00 AM CST

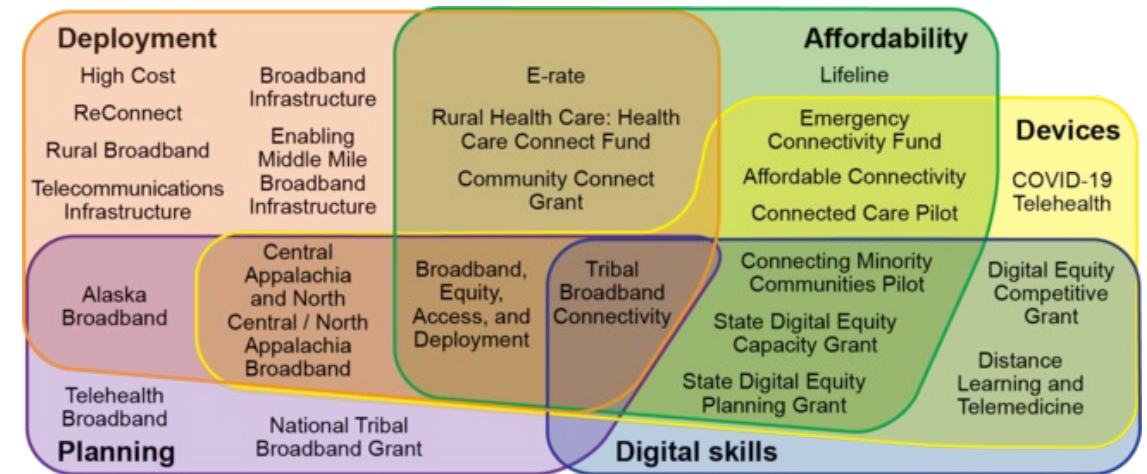
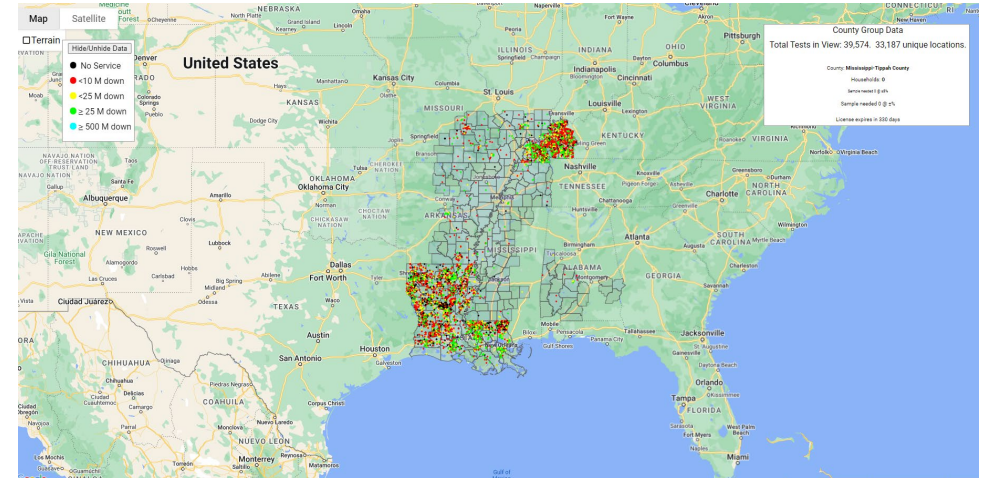


Courtesy Amy Bickel

Fiber being installed in rural Kansas. While the FCC broadband map estimates 5% of the state is unserved, the Kansas Office of Broadband Development

Policy Levers-Federal Agencies Involved

- USDA
- FCC
- NTIA
- Commerce
- Education
- HUD
- Labor
- Interior
- Treasury
- Regional Commissions/Authority

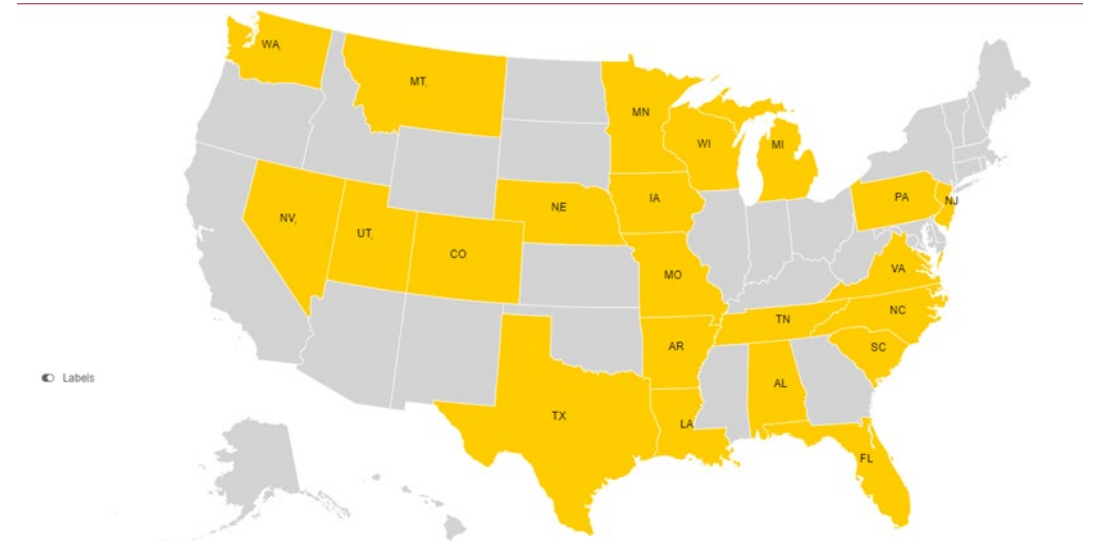


Source: GAO analysis. | GAO-22-104611

Source: [BroadbandUSA](#); [GAO Report](#)

Policy Levers-State

- Preemption laws/municipal broadband networks
- Expanding access
- Education and schools
- Infrastructure
- Service mapping
- Funding and taxes
- Net neutrality
- Provider and consumer relations
- Governance



Source: [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)

Partners

- State broadband offices
- Utility companies
- Library associations
- Extension
 - [Public-private partnerships](#)
- Farm Bureaus



Key Takeaways

- Consider the challenging policy environment and rapid influx of funds into broadband
- Use data and stories to advocate for change
- Leverage partnerships and develop new ones to advocate for change

IOWA

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Thank you!

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→ <https://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/hmp/>

www.acre-lab.org