**Creating Connections**

**Addressing the Needs of Children & Youth with Autism & Other Developmental Disabilities Using Telehealth**

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program at the Washington State Department of Health is working to increase access to telehealth across Washington to counter gaps in early diagnosis and care for children with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities living in rural areas; from culturally and linguistically diverse families, including refugee and immigrant families; and from low-income families on Medicaid.

### Provider Capacity Assessment

**Participants:** 53 providers surveyed

- Neurodevelopmental centers
- Medicaid-designated centers of excellence for autism diagnosis
- Applied behavior analysis providers

**Timeline:** Summer 2017

**We wanted to understand:**

- Providers' current capacity to offer telehealth services
- Challenges that limit their capacity
- Needed technical support around telehealth

### Family and Caregiver Survey

**Participants:** 118 caregivers

**Timeline:** Summer 2017

**We wanted to understand:**

- The barriers caregivers experience when trying to access services
- How caregivers perceive telehealth

### Project Purpose

- Develop a telehealth strategic plan.
- Create a comprehensive telehealth family engagement strategy.
- Develop a telehealth capacity assessment.
- Conduct a telehealth landscape assessment, including: a family and caregiver survey, a provider capacity assessment, and key informant interviews with a variety of providers.

### Steps Forward

- **Next Steps**
  - Continue to share our telehealth capacity assessment and strategic plan with all providers and stakeholders.
  - Work with the Washington State Telehealth Collaborative to leverage telehealth resources for training and guidance on technology.
  - Explore opportunities with community partners to develop telehealth capacity assessment tools.
  - Work with the Medicaid program to ensure there is a system in place to allow telehealth services.
  - Develop a comprehensive telehealth family engagement strategy.

### What is Telehealth?

- Telehealth utilizes technology, such as videoconferencing, to deliver virtual health care, including health, mental health, and education services.

### Challenges Moving Forward

- **Medicaid**
  - Providers are confused about which billing codes they can use. Written guidance is limited to certain Medicaid provider guides, which adds to the confusion.
  - Additionally, there are nuances around referrer and payor requirements, which restricts the use of store and forward telehealth.

- **Private Insurance**
  - Policies restrict the use of store and forward telehealth.

- **Providers**
  - There are nuances around referrer and payor requirements, which restricts the use of store and forward telehealth.
  - There are no uniform written rules governing all licensed care professionals related to telehealth.

### What We've Done

- Developed a comprehensive telehealth strategic plan.
- Created a telehealth family engagement strategy.
- Developed a telehealth capacity assessment.
- Conducted a telehealth landscape assessment, including: a family and caregiver survey, a provider capacity assessment, and key informant interviews with a variety of providers.

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**Supplemental Key Informant Interviews**

**Participants:** providers (e.g., psychologists, physicians, and behavioral technicians)

**Timeline:** Spring 2017 – Summer 2018

**Goal:** Understand provider perceptions of telehealth

We learned providers want information about:

- How to bill, getting reimbursed, and clarity on what is reimbursable
- Setting up telehealth training, including how to train staff to use telehealth
- Standards for care for services delivered via telehealth
- How to access language interpreters.