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HIV CARE & TREATMENT

# Successful Use of Telehealth in Rural Communities: An Emerging Model of Care for HIV Providers

Thursday, August 13, 2020

# Session Agenda



- “Prescribing Buprenorphine Through Telemedicine on a Mobile Unit in an Underserved Rural County: Pilot Data and Lessons Learned” by University of Maryland, School of Medicine
- “OSU Telemedicine” by Oklahoma State University
- Q&A



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# Prescribing Buprenorphine Through Telemedicine on a Mobile Unit in an Underserved Rural County: Pilot Data and Lessons Learned

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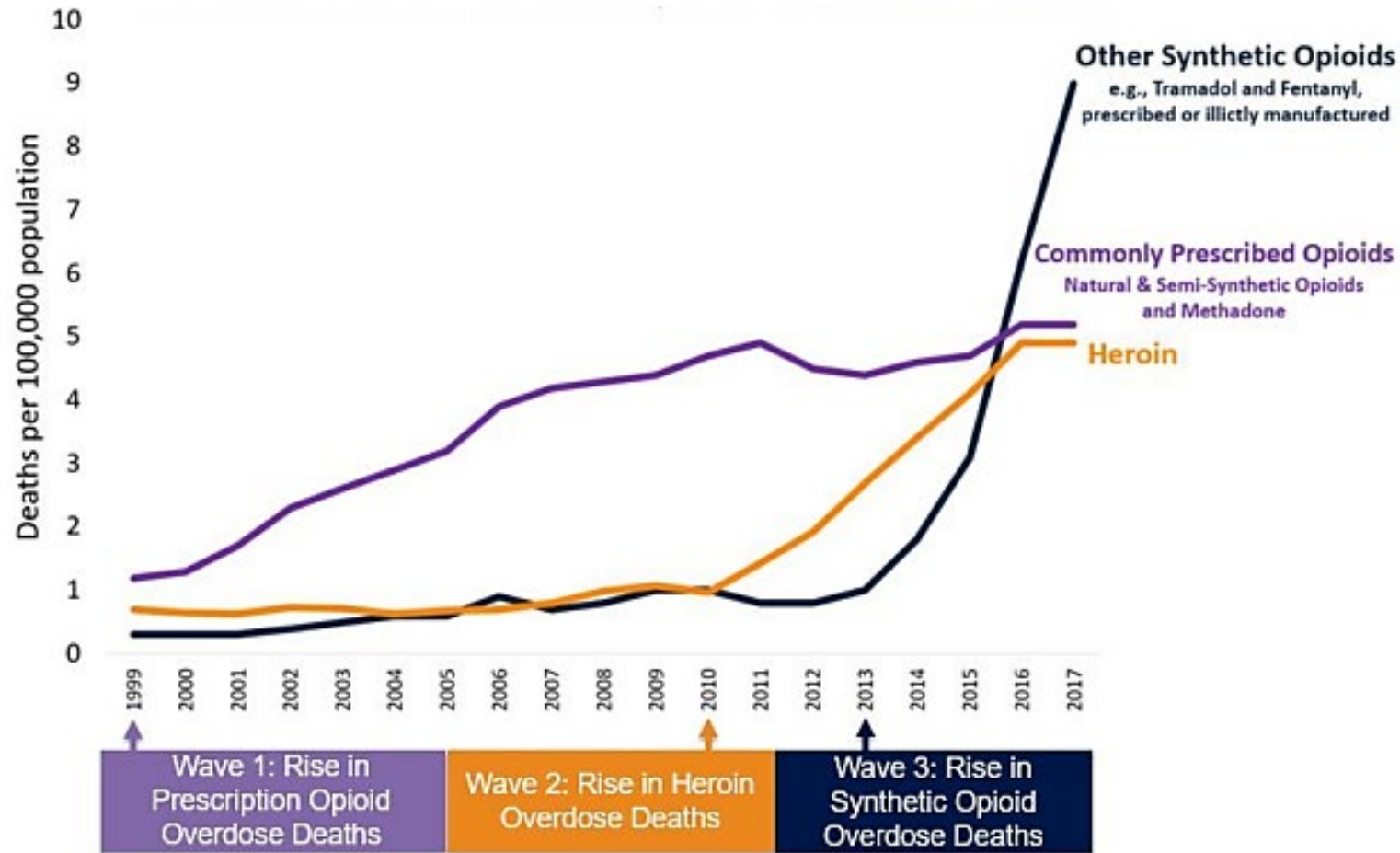
University of Maryland, School of Medicine

# Learning Objectives



- To understand the current extent and severity of the opioid epidemic in the United States with a focus on issues impacting rural America
- Outline available effective evidence-based treatments and interventions for individuals with opioid use disorder and to discuss barriers to these interventions in underserved rural areas
- Discuss the use of current telemedicine interventions with a focus on a mobile unit that are being utilized to expand access to medication-based treatment in these underserved rural areas

# 3 WAVES OF THE RISE IN OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATHS



SOURCE: National Vital Statistics System Mortality File.

# RURAL AND URBAN SUBSTANCE ABUSE RATES



	Non-metro	Small metro	Large metro
Alcohol use by youths aged 12-20	37.8%	35.3%	34.3%
Binge alcohol use by youths aged 12 to 17 (in the past month)	5.5%	4.9%	4.7%
Cigarette smoking	28.5%	24.1%	20.5%
Smokeless tobacco use	8.5%	5.0%	3.0%
Marijuana	11.2%	13.2%	15.0%
Illicit drug use	14.2%	17.3%	19.4%
Misuse of Opioids	4.0%	4.4%	4.5%
Cocaine	1.1%	1.8%	2.1%
Crack	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%
Methamphetamine	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%

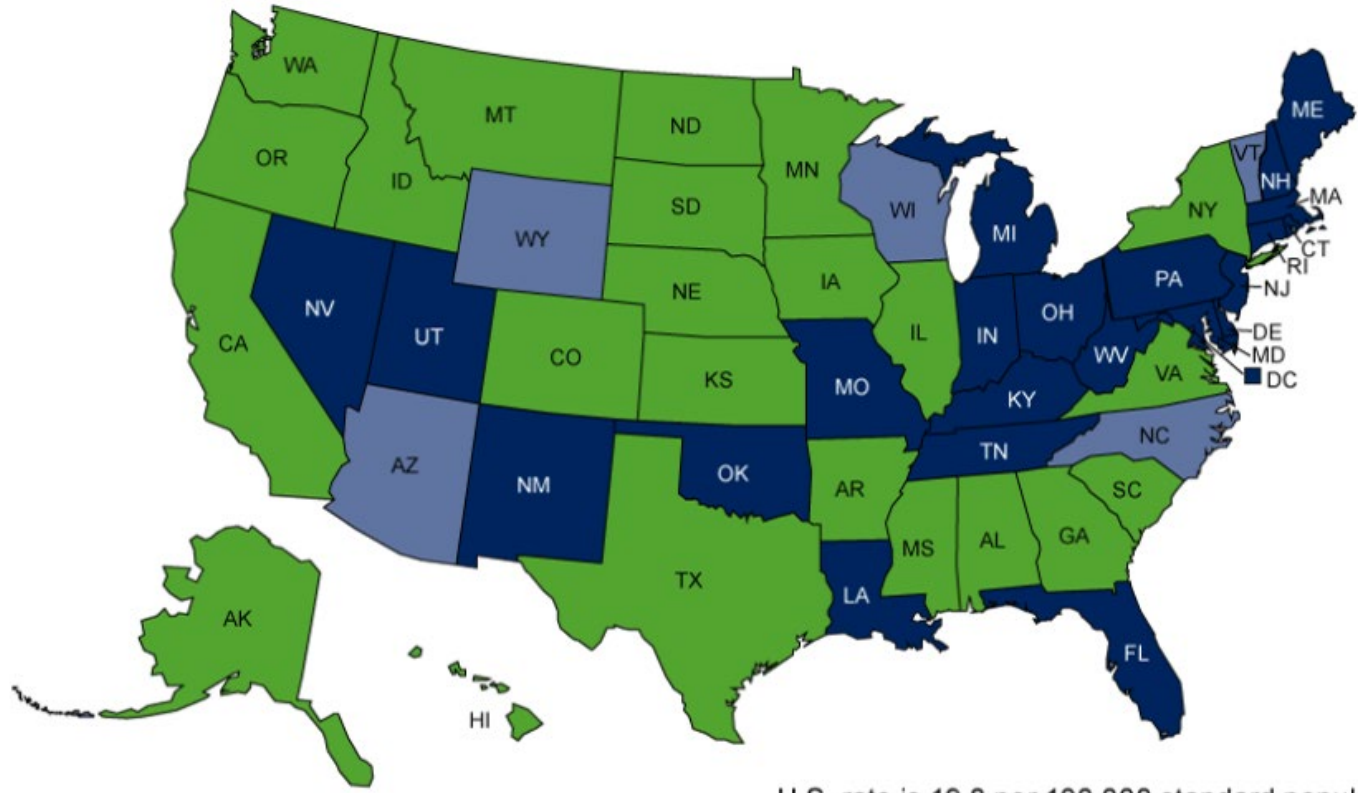
Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), [Results from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables](#).

# Rural Overdose Deaths



- In 2006 rates for rural areas surpassed those of urban areas
- 2015: rural rates 17/100,000, urban rate 16.2/100,000
- From 1999 to 2015 drug overdose deaths increased by 325% in rural areas compared to 198% in urban areas
- Majority of overdose deaths occur at home, long EMT transport times, lack of public access to EMT, increased number of basic EMT's who cannot give naloxone

- CDC MMWR Report October, 2017.



U.S. rate is 19.8 per 100,000 standard population.

- Statistically lower than U.S. rate
- Statistically the same as U.S. rate
- Statistically higher than U.S. rate

Source: CDC



# Rural America



- Certain rural areas disproportionately impacted
- Higher overdose rates
- Higher rates of opioid prescribing
- Physical jobs with more injuries and chronic pain
- Higher rates of NAS
- Increased incidence of Hepatitis C infection

- Recent CDC study demonstrated that those in rural counties had an 87 percent higher rate of receiving prescriptions than those in large metro counties, Athena health over 30,000 PCP's 9.6 percent to 5.2 percent. 14 rural counties were the among the 15 counties with the highest prescribing rates.  
[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6802a1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6802a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6802a1.htm?s_cid=mm6802a1_w) <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2592302> NAS increase five fold between 2000-12 with an greater increase in rural areas. Incidence twice as high in rural areas, younger than 30, non urban white

# Medication Assisted Treatment



“Access to medication-assisted treatment can mean [the] difference between life or death.”

*Michael Botticelli, October 23, 2014 Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy*



National Academy of Sciences, Alan Leishner and Michelle Mancher, Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Save Lives. Medication based treatment for opioid use disorder, not a complementary or temporary aid

# Medication Based Treatment



- Decrease overdose rates
- Increases retention in treatment
- Decreases illicit opioid use
- Improves social functioning
- Decreases transmission of infectious diseases
- Decreases criminal activity

# Clinical Goals

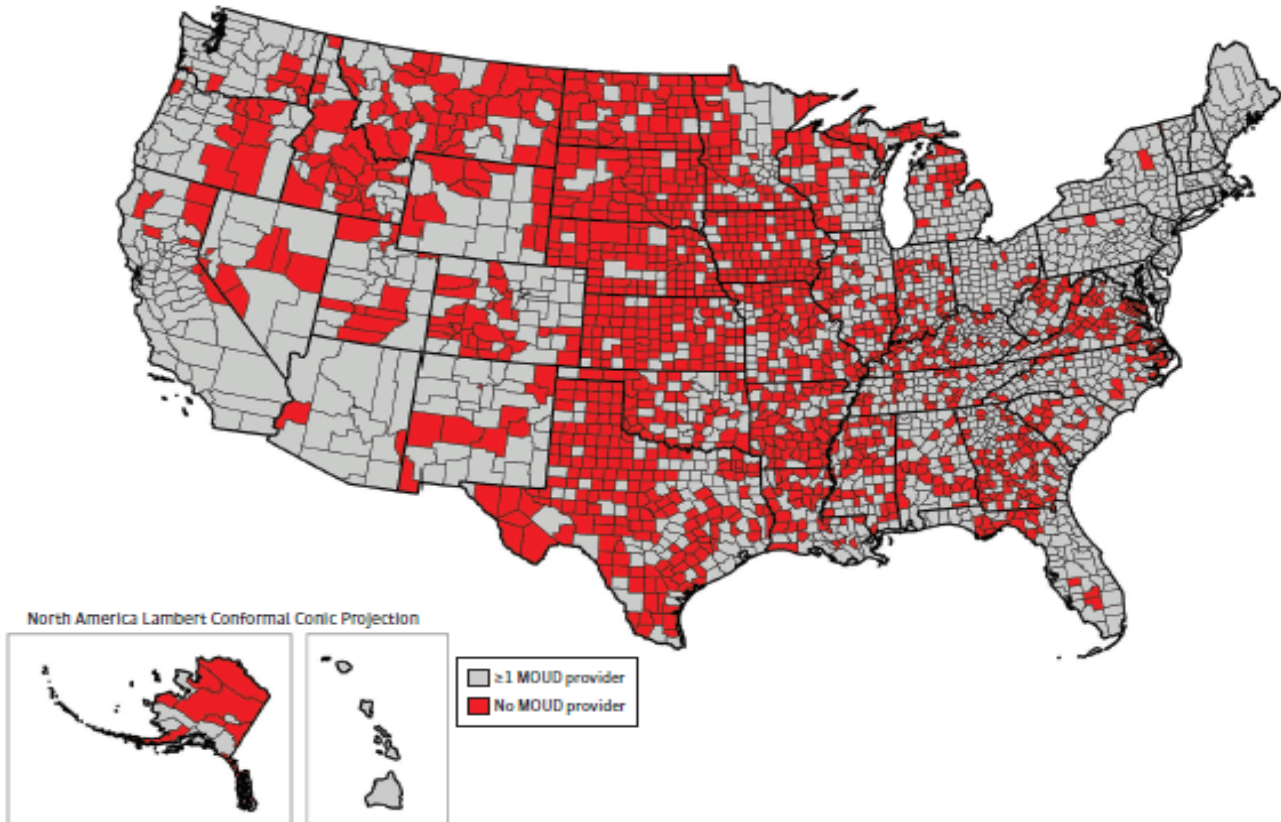


- Immediate engagement and linkage to treatment
- Expanding access to treatment
- Co-location of medical and mental health services within addiction treatment services
- Enhancing recovery services for patients

# US COUNTIES LACKING ANY PUBLICLY AVAILABLE MEDICATION FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER--2017



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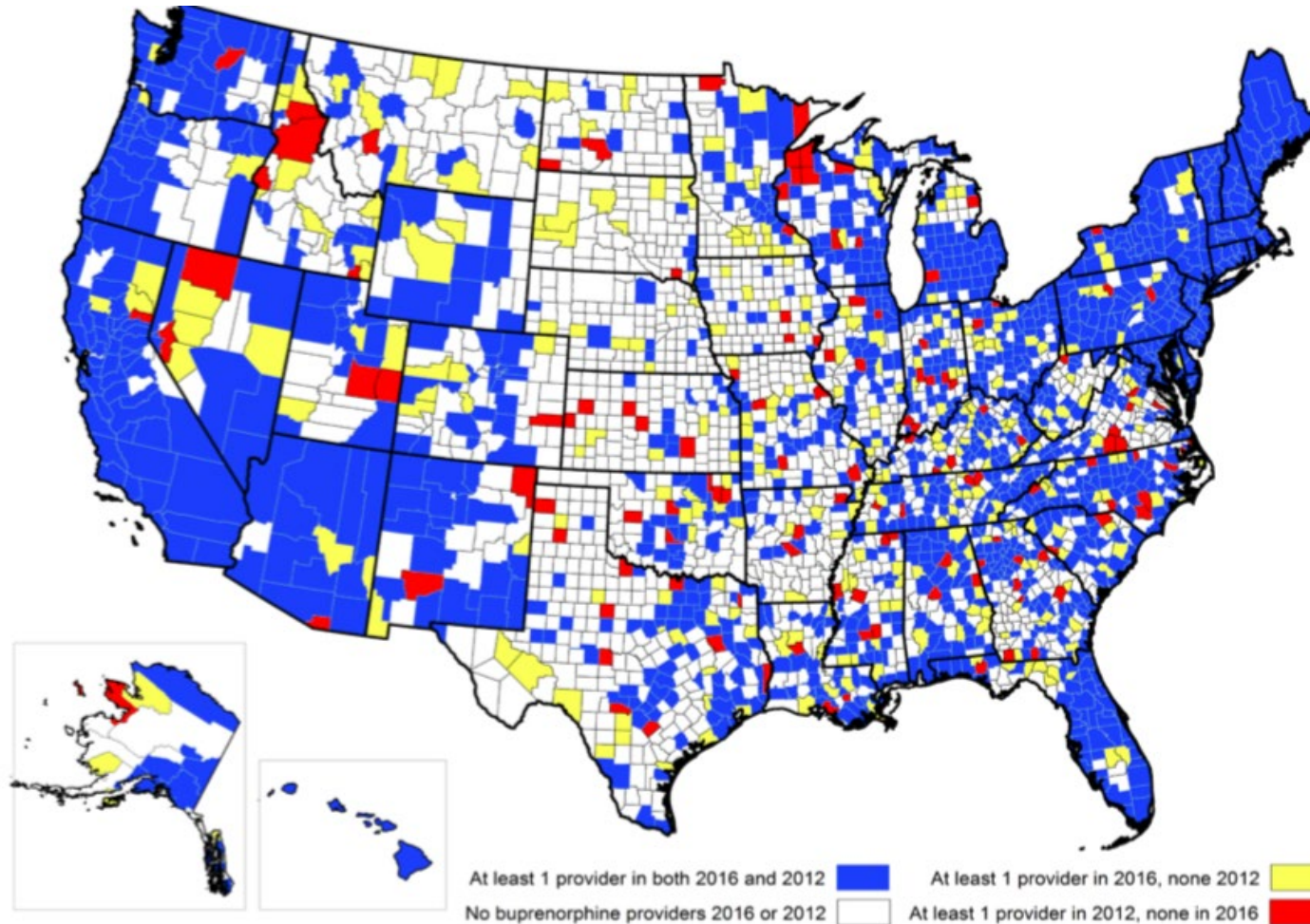
Medication for opioid use disorder providers are defined to include publicly listed opioid treatment programs, buprenorphine-waivered clinicians, and/or extended-release naltrexone-prescribing clinicians in late 2017.

Haffajee, RL et al. JAMA Network Open 2019

# Map of U.S. Buprenorphine Providers



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Data Source: DEA Waivered physician list, July 2012 & April 2016  
Map Date: May 2016

# Barriers to Medication Assisted Treatment in Rural Areas



- Geography/ transportation/weather
- Health workforce shortages
- Stigma
- Lack of insurance coverage
- Privacy issues/lack of anonymity

# Barriers to Methadone Treatment in Rural Areas



- Lack of methadone programs/less than 5% in rural areas
- Methadone programs are highly regulated and require frequent attendance and daily dosing early in treatment
- Long travel time/high transportation costs
- Long wait lists



# Barriers to Buprenorphine Treatment in Rural Areas: Availability



- Less than 3% of US physicians are waived
- 52.5% of US counties have at least one waived provider
- 60.1% of rural counties have no waived providers (down from 67% in 2012)
- Many waived providers treat many fewer patients than the maximum allowed or none at all

# Barriers to Buprenorphine Tx in Rural Areas: Provider Factors



## All

1. Time constraints
2. Diversion concerns
3. Lack of mental health, psychosocial support

## Non-Prescribers

1. Lack of patient need
2. Resistance from practice partners
3. Lack of specialty back up for complex cases
4. DEA
5. Administrative/infrastructure
6. Lack of confidence



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## **RYAN HAIGHT, 18, VICODIN**

Ryan died from an overdose of prescription drugs he had purchased online. He was only 18.

# Ryan Haight Act



- Ryan Haight Online Consumer Protection Act
- Amended the Controlled Substances Act to address the appropriate dispensing and prescribing of controlled substances by the internet.
- Targets Rogue “Form Only” Online Pharmacies
- Passed in 2008 and took effect in April 2009
- To prevent illegal distribution and dispensing of **controlled substances** via the internet

# Ryan Haight Act



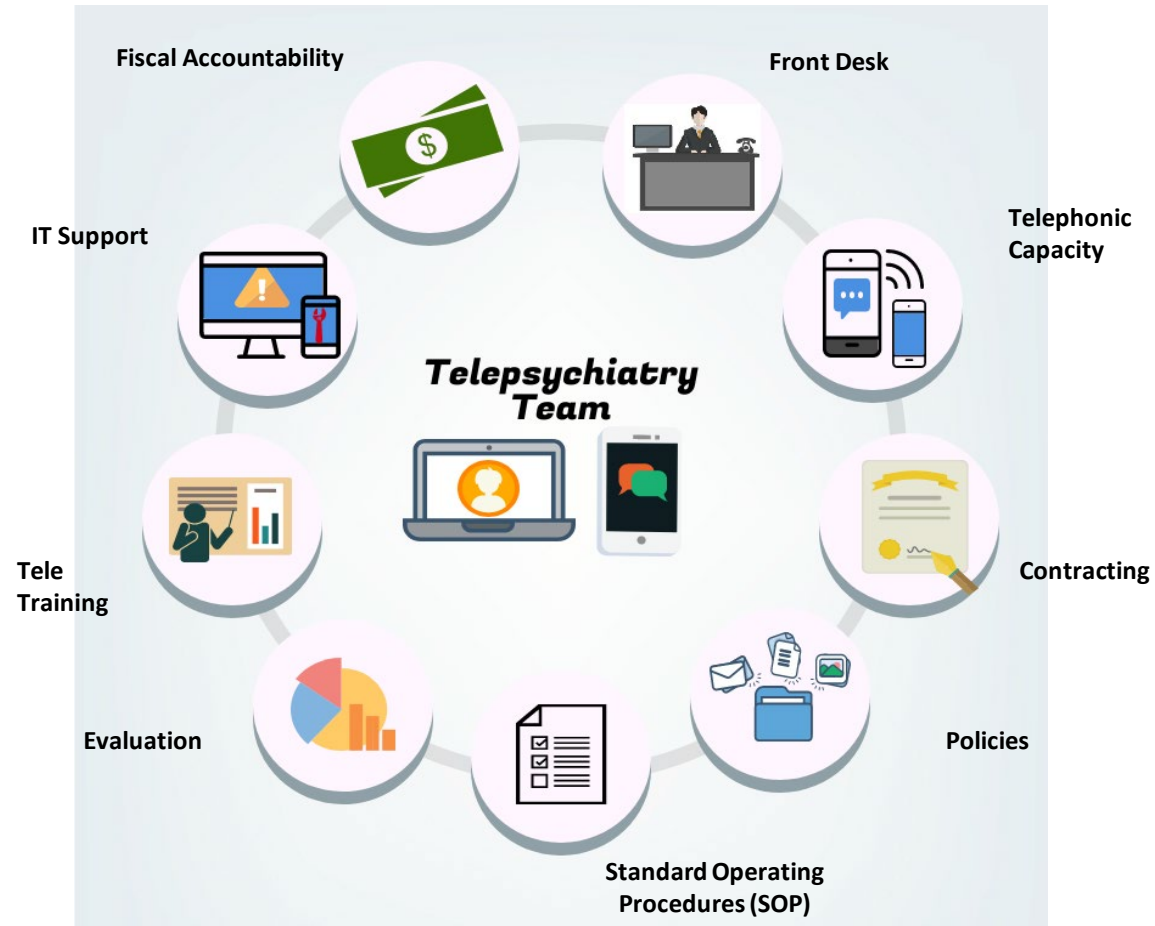
- No controlled substance may be delivered, distributed, or dispensed without a “Valid Prescription”
- “Valid Prescription” A prescription issued for a legitimate medical purpose in the usual course of professional practice
- A Prescription issued by a practitioner who has conducted. at least 1 “in-person medical evaluation” of the patient
- In-Person Medical Evaluation A medical evaluation that is conducted with the patient in the **physical presence** of the practitioner

# Ryan Haight Act: Update



- Special Registration for Telemedicine Act of 2018
- Requires DEA to finalize regulations for special registration for providers to prescribe controlled substances via telemedicine without the need for an in-person exam
- A deadline of October 24,2019 for the completion of the new regulations

# Centralized Infrastructure Functions



# Rural Telemedicine Partnerships at University of Maryland



- Rural Health Departments
  - Caroline County (CCHD)
  - Garrett County (GCHD)
  - Eastern Shore Mobile Care Collaborative
- Rural OP/IOP/Residential Treatment
  - Wells House/Gale House
- Rural Nonprofit Outpatient Practice
  - Life's Energy Wellness Center Inc. (Talbot County)



# Tele MAT Sites 2019



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# Eastern Shore Mobile Care Collaborative



- New grant-funded initiative
- Increase engagement in addiction/overdose hotspots
- Direct referral source for local Emergency Departments
- Ability to collect urine toxicology, meet with peer, counselor, and nurse, and see MD via secure video link
- Active since 2/20/19



# Caroline County Demographics



- Population 33,406 (20<sup>th</sup> out of 24 counties in Maryland)
- Caucasian 81.4%, Black 14.1 %
- Land Area 319.42 square miles (19<sup>th</sup> out of 24 counties)
- Population per square mile- 103.5
- Households with computers- 84.6%
- Households with broadband 76.5%





CAROLINE COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
Caring for Caroline

THE EASTERN SHORE  
MOBILE CARE COLLABORATIVE  
AT THE CAROLINE COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

211 Maryland  
IN CRISIS? CA  
Get Co

STAND UP  
CAROLINE DOES PUFF

211 MARYLAND  
IN CRISIS? CA  
Get Co

The Mobile Treatment Unit is currently serving patients in four different townships in the county: Denton, Federalsburg, Greensboro and Ridgely. Future plans include increasing service locations in Caroline County (pictured to the right) and throughout other counties within the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

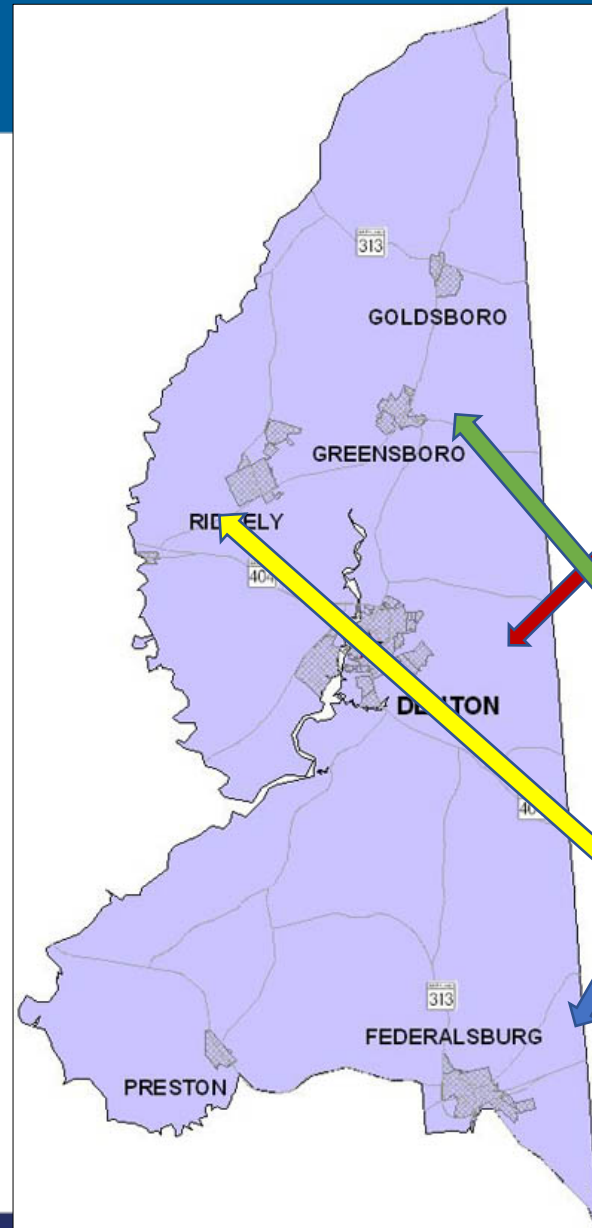
### Dates the Mobile Treatment Unit Began Providing Services in the Following Cities:

Denton, Maryland: **January 2019**

Federalsburg, Maryland: **June 2019**

Greensboro, Maryland: **October 2019**

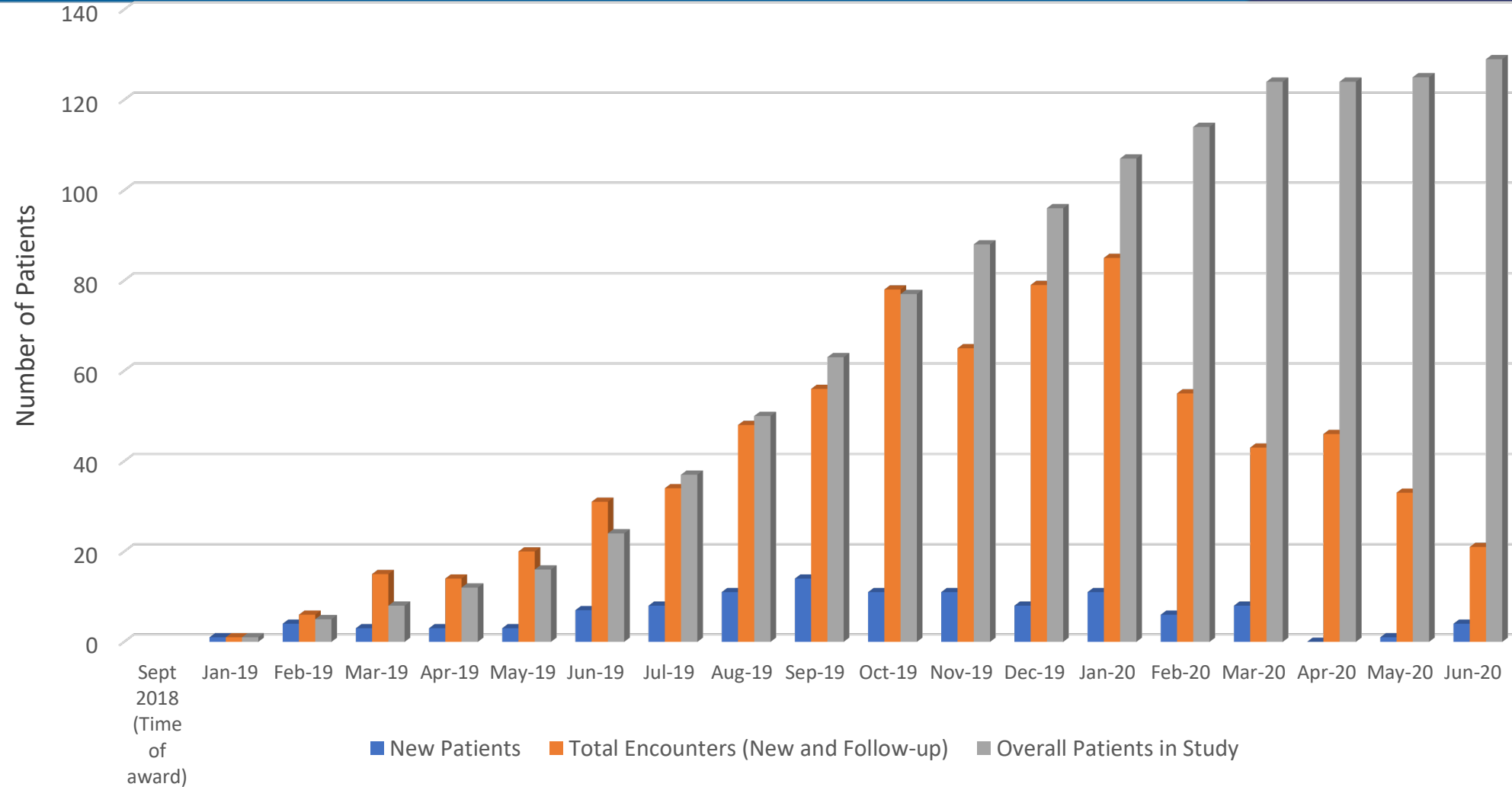
Ridgely, Maryland: **February 2020**



Map of Caroline County, MD

After the implementation of the ESMCC program, patients have saved an average of 9.93 miles by traveling to a treatment site closest to them.

# MTU Patient Overview



Total Number of Patients who have been treated by a telemedicine provider between January 2019 and June 19, 2020: **129**

# RV Technology

- Verizon JetPack MHS 900L Hotspot
- Netgear Wi-Fi extender with single ethernet jack for Poly Debut
- Poly Debut endpoint
- Endpoint is registered to Cisco Expressways for complete monitoring end to end
- Provider is able to call the RV at any location using Cisco DX-80 or Webex Teams at their desk or through a laptop.
- All video calls are encrypted using AES 128 bit encryption.
- Medical grade portable power system power Debut, wi-fi extender and TV.





# Program Adaptations



- Increasing flexibility of scheduling
  - Desk-top set-up
  - System compatibility
  - EMR
- E-prescribing
- Expanding medication capabilities (ie. Vivitrol)
- Billing

- 2018-2020--CareFirst: *“Expanding Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment in Rural Areas with the Use of Telemedicine”*, \$220,000
- 2018-2021--HRSA: *Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program*, \$900,000
- 2020-2022--Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE): *Treatment with Buprenorphine through Telemedicine in a Rural Criminal Justice System*, \$600,000

# Future Directions



## Adapting to other clinical models

- Mobile MAT/ HRSA Grant
  - In-home treatment (for patient)
  - Integration of telemedicine with Emergency Departments, EMT's and the criminal justice system
  - Role in OTPs
- 
- Development of evidenced based standard operating procedures
- 
- Enhancement of consultation/supervision capability  
HUB and Spoke Model
- 
- Integration of infectious disease treatment

# OSU Telemedicine

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Assistant Medical Director

Oklahoma State University Internal Medicine Specialty Services



# OSU Internal Medicine Specialty Services Clinic



\*Established in September 1996 by  
Thomas Stees, DO

\*Cared for over 3000 HIV-positive  
persons since 1996

\*Coverage of the eastern half of the  
state

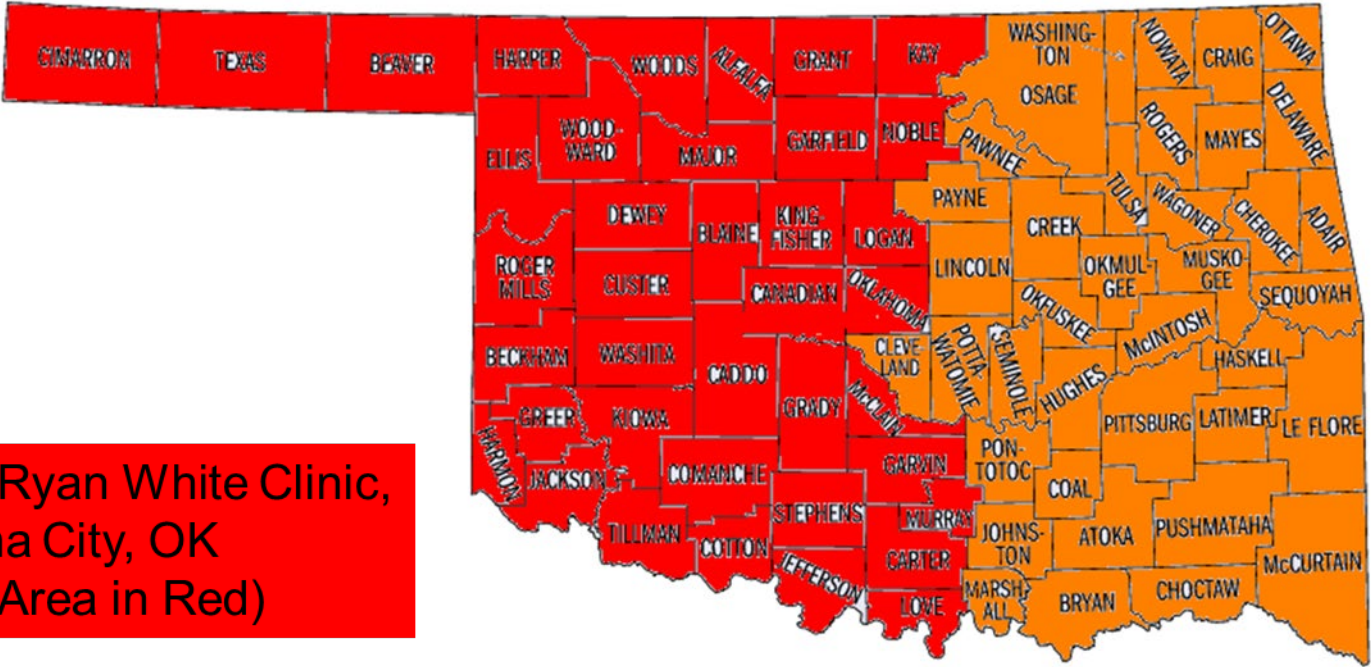


# Oklahoma Service Areas



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OSU-CHS Ryan White Clinic, Tulsa, OK  
(Service Area in Orange)



OUHSC Ryan White Clinic,  
Oklahoma City, OK  
(Service Area in Red)

# Telemedicine



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# Patient Case



- 55M, HIV-positive in Poteau, OK
- Barrier - transportation
- Treated with Reyataz/Norvir/Descovy
- CD4=300, VL<20 (scanned)
- Cough – Azithromycin and Flonase prescribed yesterday
- Rash – “itchy spot” on right leg
- Telemed appt
- Labs & appt in Poteau
- Rx refills e-scribed
- Meds/labs reviewed with pt
- Interaction between Flonase and Norvir discussed
- Stethoscope – lungs clear
- Dermascope used to diagnose and treat tinea corporis



# Barriers to HIV Care



- Mental Health
- Substance abuse
- Nutrition
- **Transportation**
- Housing

## Mobile Telemedicine Clinic



© 2010 Oklahoma State University



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30 YEARS

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# Comparison: Polycom vs. Zoom



## POLYCOM

- Expensive \$4000-\$5000 for unit and annual fee
- High quality camera
- More difficult set-up and use
- Requires updates
- Limited use

## ZOOM

- Cost effective
- Easy to use
- Use on desktop, laptop, tablet, or cell phone
- Less equipment
- Multi-purpose platform



30 YEARS

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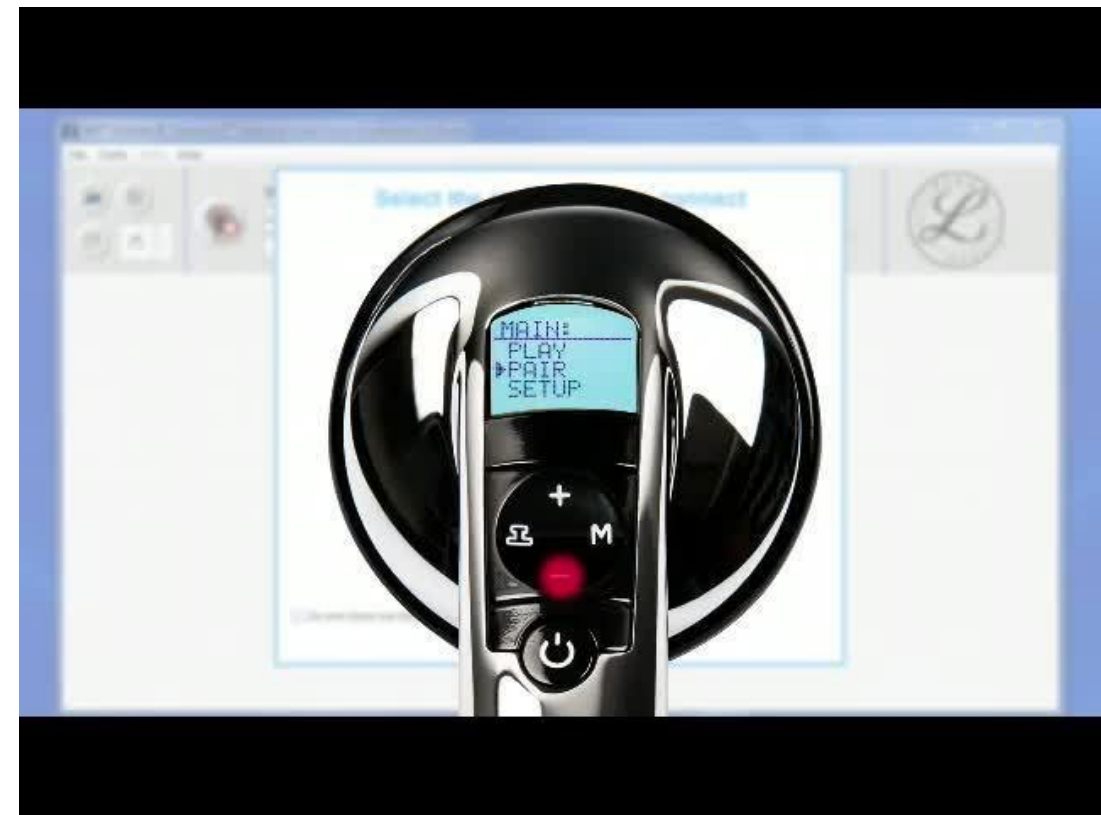
30 YEARS

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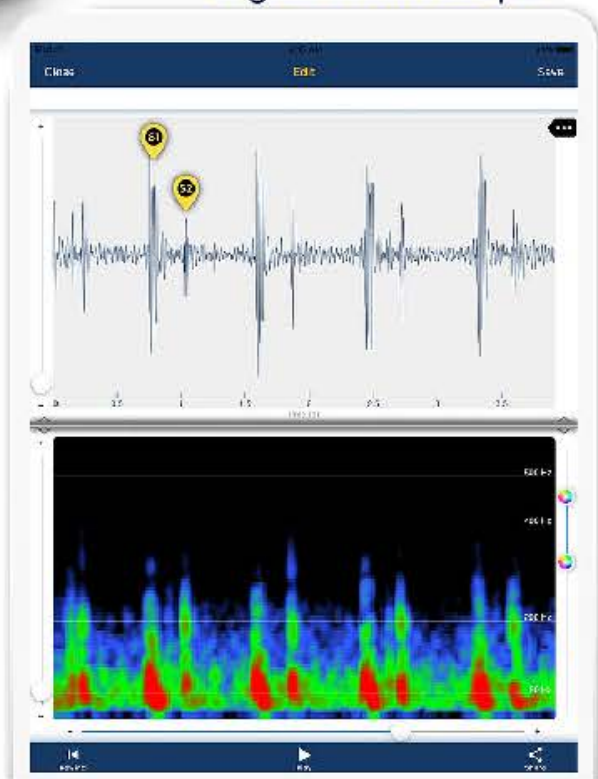
# STETHOSCOPE





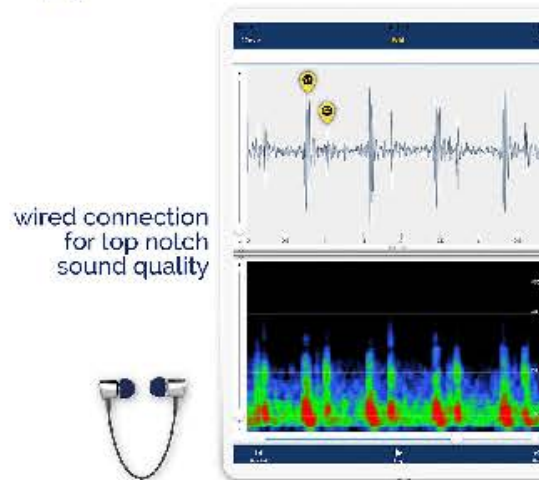
## CAPTURE SOUND

from your Thinklabs One Digital Stethoscope



## RECORD AND SAVE

Save to your mobile device



wired connection  
for top notch  
sound quality



Thinklink Mobile Kit included with your One

## SHARE SOUND

through email or messaging apps...



audio  
photo  
video



# Staff



- **Telemedicine bus driver** requires a commercial driver's license and competent with technology of equipment, software, and connectivity
- **Nurse** required for rooming (vitals, med rec, PHQ-9) and needs to be competent with equipment. Documentation in EMR.
- **Physician** needs to be competent with the equipment and coding

# Challenges



- Weather or mechanical issues for bus, maintenance and fuel costs
- Wifi and stethoscope connectivity
- Software updates
- Inexperienced staff on telemedicine equipment
- Cancelled appointments or “no shows”
- Secure site location of bus & Storage of bus when not in use
- Referrals in rural areas
- Time spent driving to and from location
- Inefficient use of time of bus driver/IT and nurse

# Overcome Challenges



- Reschedule due to weather or mechanical issues for telemed bus
- Wifi hotspot or direct cable connection to local network
- Use of cell phones if Wifi connectivity issues
- Anticipation of software updates
- Use of earbuds instead of stethoscope improved sound/connection
- Education of staff on telemedicine equipment
- Secure and discrete location of bus and test signal strength
- Contract with hospital for use of building space for telemedicine

# PROS AND CONS OF TELEMED



## PROS

- Convenience
- Affordable
- Saves time and transport

## CONS

- Connectivity issues
- Loss of personal touch
- Difficult for complicated cases
- Limited physical exam



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Thank you to my  
telemedicine staff!



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