



**Office for the Advancement of Telehealth (OAT)
2021–2026 Evidence-Based Telehealth Network Program (EB TNP)
Performance Improvement and Measurement System (PIMS)**

**Summary Report for Program Year 1
(September 1, 2021 -August 31, 2022)**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Methods	3
Findings	3
Description of Grantees and Settings	3
Grantee Specialty Areas.....	5
Patient Encounters and Travel Miles Saved	6
Other Uses of Telehealth Network	6
Diabetes	8
Mental Health	8
Conclusions	9
Appendix A – Sample PIMS Report Template	10

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), Office for the Advancement of Telehealth (OAT) Evidence-Based Telehealth Network Program (EB TNP) is to demonstrate how health networks can increase access to health care services utilizing telehealth technologies and to conduct evaluations of those efforts to establish an evidence base for assessing the effectiveness of telehealth care for patients, providers, and payers. The current EB TNP cohort focuses on direct-to-consumer (DTC) telehealth. Direct-to-consumer telehealth represents care that is provided virtually in a home-based or other community setting, instead of a clinic or other health care setting. It may also be referred to as “direct-to-patient” or “on-demand” care and allows for patients to receive medical advice or treatment at a time and location that is convenient to them.¹

HRSA defines telehealth as the use of electronic information and telecommunication technologies to support and promote long-distance clinical health care, patient and professional health-related education, and public health.² Telehealth modalities that support clinical treatment may include video conferencing, the internet, store-and-forward imaging, streaming media, and terrestrial and wireless communications. Rising evidence supports that many health conditions can be addressed with a virtual in-home visit from a doctor to his or her patient.³ In 2015, the American College of Physicians declared their position and support for direct-to-consumer (DTC) considering the patient has an established relationship with the providers, and the care meets in-person standards of quality.⁴

The current EB TNP program began September 1, 2021, funding a total of 11 grantees, and is aimed towards providing DTC telehealth services to patients within established telehealth networks to expand care into Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and primary care or mental health-defined Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). The EB TNP program presents the opportunity for network sites that are currently or have previously utilized telehealth as defined above to efficiently and effectively pilot and/or expand DTC telehealth care. Grantees utilize synchronous (i.e., real-time virtual visits) audio-visual technology and may include remote patient monitoring (RPM) to provide DTC telehealth care to patients. This EB TNP program expands access to health services in three clinical primary focus areas: (1) primary care, (2) acute care, and (3) behavioral health care. In addition, grantees may address one of the following secondary focus areas: maternal care, substance use disorder, or chronic care management.

During each year of the 5-year EB TNP grant cycle, grantees collect and report on a core set of standardized measures known as the Performance Improvement Measurement System (PIMS).

¹ Telehealth.HHS.Gov. (updated October 2022). Telehealth for direct-to-consumer care. Retrieved from: <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/direct-to-consumer/>

² Health Resources and Services Administration (updated March 2022). What is Telehealth. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/topics/telehealth/what-is-telehealth>

³ Gough, F., Budhrani, S., Cohn, E. et al. (2015). *ATA Practice Guidelines for Live, On Demand Primary and Urgent Care*. *Telemedicine Journal and e-health: the official journal of the American Telemedicine Association*. 21. 10.1089/tmi.2015.0008.

⁴ Welch, B.M., Harvey, J., O’Connell, N.S. & McElligott J.T. (2017). Patient preferences for direct-to-consumer telemedicine services: a nationwide survey. *BMC health services research*, 17(1), 784. <https://doi.org/10.1186/212913-017-2744-8>.

Data submitted by the grantees in the 2021 cohort and analyzed for this report focus on data collected during the first year of the program, September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022. Future reports will include additional annual data and allow for presentation of trends in program measures over time.

METHODS

The analyst was provided with an export of data for all 11 EB TNP grantees for the period of September 1, 2021, to August 31, 2022. The export originated from the Health Resources and Services Administration Evidence-Based Telehealth Network Program (EB TNP) Performance Improvement Measurement System (PIMS) database. Data included information about network sites (including individual site settings and specialties); telehealth-related services provided; mileage averted as a result of telehealth services; telehealth services and patients specifically related to the priority areas of diabetes, mental/behavioral health, and substance use disorder; and other uses of the telehealth network (i.e., administrative meetings, distance learning, and informal and formal education).

The indicators in the dataset were aggregated within each subsection to provide an overview of performance on each indicator. The analysis was conducted in Microsoft Excel, using pivot table functions and aggregation formulas.

FINDINGS

Description of Grantees and Settings

Figure 1 indicates the organization type for the lead grantee entity⁵, and Figure 2 indicates the various organization settings of all sites for each grantee where care was provided during the reporting period (note: grantees have multiple sites and organization settings). The most common grantee organization type is universities/academic medical centers (Figure 1). The most common setting for care delivery was clinics, followed by other settings and community health centers (Figure 2).

⁵ Data for Lead Grantee Organization Type was extracted from the OAT Program Directory based on organization type self-report by each grantee. This is the sole non-PIMS measure in the report.

Figure 1. Lead Grantee Organization Type (N=11)

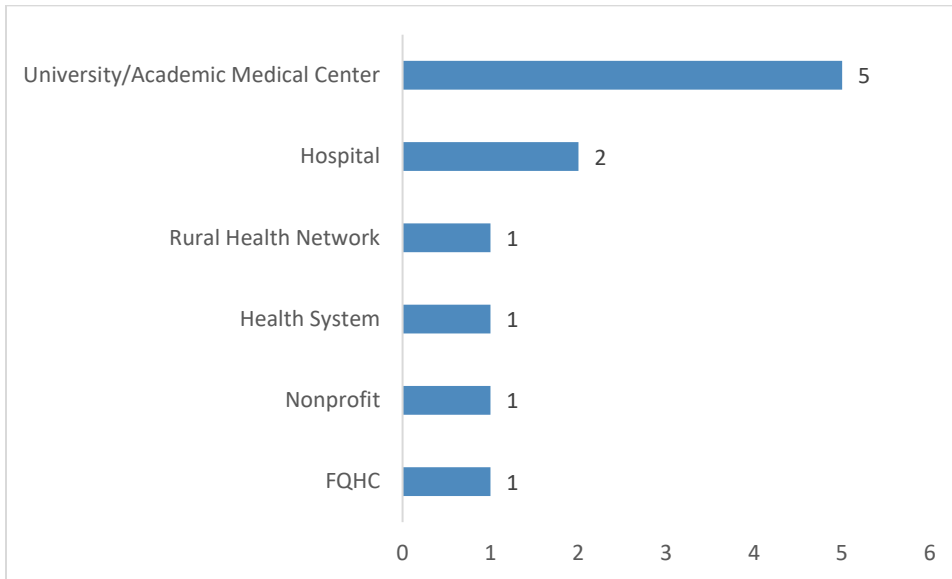
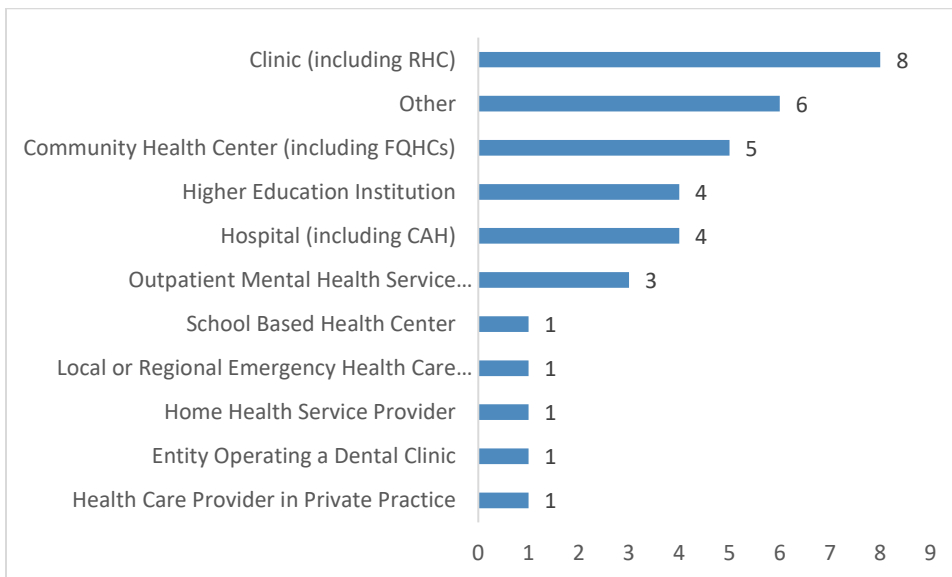


Figure 2. Organization Setting for Care Delivery



The grantee networks are organized into originating and distant sites, where the originating sites are where patients are located for care services, and distant sites are where telehealth consultations or care are provided from. Given the focus of this program on DTC telehealth care, many originating sites are expected to represent either home or other community settings, as opposed to clinical settings; however, this level of distinction is not reflected in the data as

reported.⁶ Table 1 shows the number and average of originating and distant sites. There are a total of 64 originating sites and 22 distant sites, with an average of 6.4 originating sites and 2.4 distant sites across grantees.

Table 1. Number Originating and Distant Sites

Number Grantees Reporting Originating Sites	Total Number Originating Sites	Average Number Originating Sites
10	64	6.4
Number Grantees Reporting Distant Sites	Total Number Distant Sites	Average Number Distant Sites
9	22	2.4

Grantee Specialty Areas

Grantees reported specialty areas among their telehealth network sites and the number of those that were added as a result of EB TNP funding (Table 2). The most common specialty area was mental/behavioral health counseling (with a total of 12 new sites added with the EB TNP funding), followed by psychiatry and primary care. One grantee added 30 new sites to provide diabetes services with the funding. A total of four sites were added to each of cardiology, oncology, and orthopedic services.

Table 2. Specialty areas

Specialty area	Number Grantees Reporting Specialty in Network – Year 1	Total Number Sites with Specialty – Year 1	Number of Specialty Sites that were added with EB TNP Funding – Year 1
Cardiology	1	4	4
Chronic Disease Counseling	1	1	1
Clinical Pharmacology	1	1	1
Dentistry	1	1	0
Diabetes Clinical Services	2	31	30
Emergency Medicine	0	0	0
Endocrinology Clinical Services	0	0	0
Gastroenterology	0	0	0
General Surgery	0	0	0
Geriatrics	0	0	0
Hematology	0	0	0

⁶ Note that originating sites data as reported in PIMS refer to clinic/hospital sites where patients are initially referred for telehealth, not the home. The actual site of services rendered cannot be captured in PIMS in order to ensure the privacy protection of patients served.

Home Health	0	0	0
Infectious Disease	1	3	0
Integrated Care	0	0	0
Mental/Behavioral Health Counseling	6	20	12
Obstetrics/Gynecology	0	0	0
Oncology	1	4	4
Orthopedics (including surgery)	1	4	4
Pediatrics	0	0	0
Physiatry/Physical Medicine	0	0	0
Primary Care (Adult)	3	7	1
Psychiatry	2	9	1
Radiology	0	0	0
Substance Abuse Services	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0

Table 3 indicates the number of grantees who reported providing priority area services in Year 1. A total of six grantees provided mental health services and two provided substance abuse treatment services.

Table 3. Provision of EB TNP Services – Mental Health & Substance Use

Service	Number Grantees
Mental Health	6
Substance Abuse Treatment	2

Patient Encounters and Travel Miles Saved

Grantees reported on the total number of encounters, number of patients served, and total patient miles saved as a result of EB TNP funding. A total of 9,084 encounters occurred (an average of 826 per grantee), with grantees serving a total of 3,234 unique patients (an average of 294 per grantee), and a total of 856,164 patient miles saved (an average of 77,833 per grantee).⁷

Table 4. Encounters, Patients Served, and Patient Miles Saved Because of EB TNP Funding

Number Encounters (Avg)	Number Patients Served (Avg)	Number Miles Saved (Avg)
9,084 (826)	3,236 (294)	856,164 (77,833)

Other Uses of Telehealth Network

Grantees report on other uses of their telehealth networks, including administrative meetings, distance learning, and informal and formal education. Figure 3 shows grantees reported using

⁷ The originating (referral) sites provide an approximation of miles saved, but do not capture the actual miles saved as the specific site of services cannot be captured in PIMS. See previous footnote #6 on page 5.

telehealth for a total of 768 administrative meetings and 898 distance learning sessions. Of the 898 distance learning sessions, 879 were informal education sessions (with a total of 298 participants), and 19 were formal education sessions (with a total of 497 participants) in Year 1 (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Administrative Meetings and Distance Learning Sessions

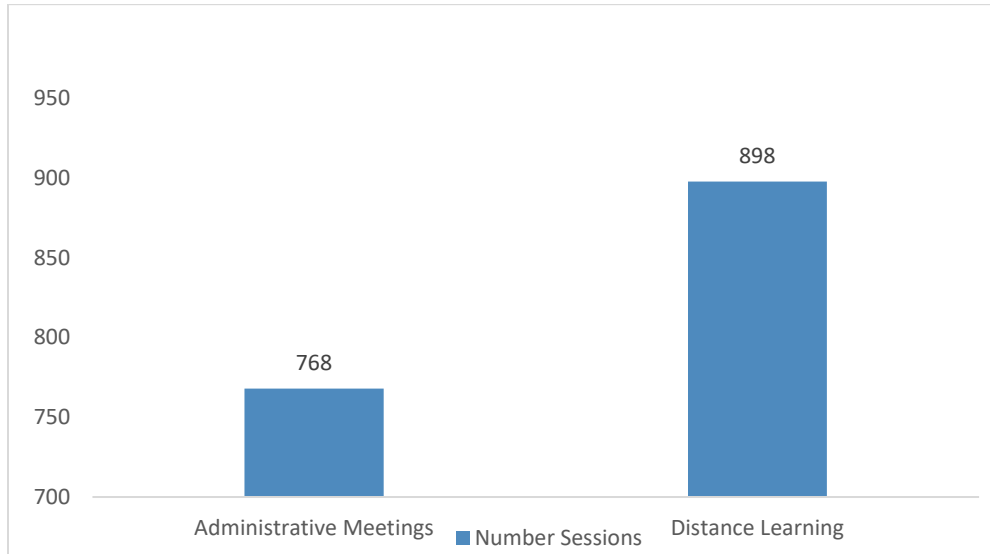
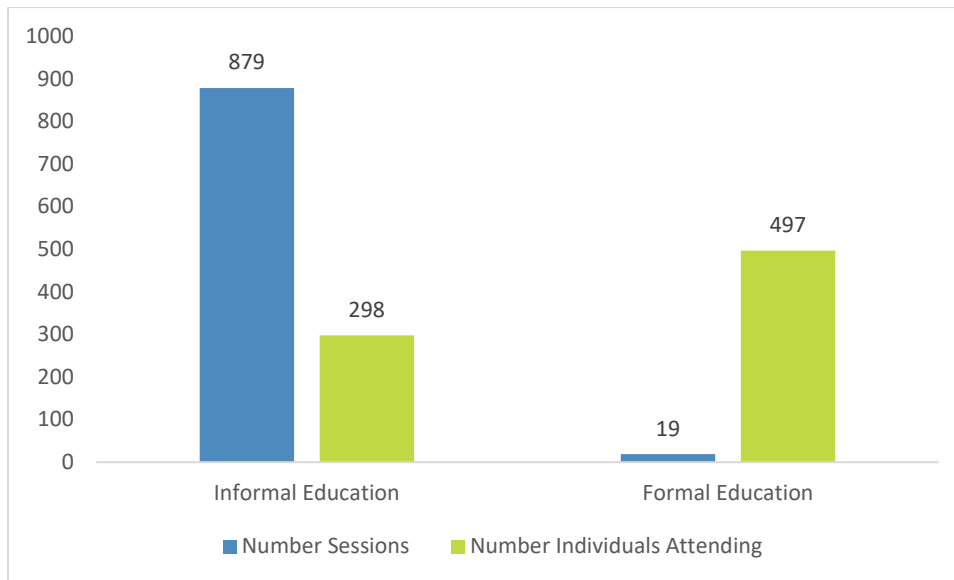


Figure 4. Distance Learning: Informal and Formal Education Sessions



Diabetes

Four grantees reported providing services to a total of 687 unique patients with diabetes with specific levels of Hemoglobin A1c. A total of 218 patients had an A1c of 7.0% or less, 289 patients had A1c levels between 7.1% and 9.0%, and 180 patients had an A1c greater than 9.0% or were not tested during the reporting period.

Table 5. Patients with diabetes served with EB TNP funding

Number unduplicated patients with diabetes served for at least 3 months	Number patients with diabetes whose most recent A1c is 7.0% or less (Avg)	Number patients with diabetes whose most recent A1c is between 7.1% and 9.0% (Avg)	Number patients with diabetes whose most recent A1c was > 9.0%/or if an A1c test was not done (Avg)
687 (62)	218 (20)	289 (26)	180 (16)

Mental Health

Grantees reported on the number of sites providing mental health services (general), mental health services for adults, and mental health services for pediatric and adolescent populations as a result of EB TNP funding. A total of 12 sites provided any mental health services, 9 sites for adult mental health services, and 7 mental health sites for pediatric/adolescent populations.

Table 6. Access to mental health services resulting from EB TNP funding

Number sites with access to mental health services resulting from EB TNP grant	Number sites with access to mental health services for adult populations resulting from EB TNP grant	Number sites with access to mental health services for pediatric/adolescent populations resulting from EB TNP grant
12	9	7

CONCLUSIONS

This PIMS report covers the first year of funding for this cohort of EB TNP grantees, which was primarily a planning and ramp up year for their DTC telehealth-focused initiatives. That said, over this first year of funding, many EB TNP grantees made substantial progress in implementing their programs as evidenced in the reported data. For many specialty areas, grantees added new sites that were not available prior to funding, providing access to important services. Grantees added a substantial number of sites providing mental health services, with 12 new sites added with EB TNP funding, nine sites providing mental health services for adults, and seven sites providing services for pediatric and adolescent populations. Grantees had over 9,000 telehealth patient encounters, reaching 3,236 unique patients in Year 1. As a result of these efforts, patients were able to receive care locally, saving a significant estimated number of travel miles (856,184 total miles).

Additionally, grantees conducted a large number of administrative meetings and distance learning sessions, with the latter representing a substantial number of formal and informal education sessions reaching a total of 795 individuals in Year 1. Four grantees reported providing services for diabetic patients in Year 1. Of the 687 unique patients with diabetes who were served during the reporting period, 26.2% (180) of them indicate poor control of diabetes or were not tested.

In conclusion, this report encompasses the first full year of PIMS data for the Evidence-Based Telehealth Network Program. With additional annual PIMS data in subsequent years, future reports will compare changes in services over time, with the expectation that increases in service sites, encounters, patients served, and patient miles saved will occur each year as grantees expand the implementation of their telehealth initiatives.

APPENDIX A – SAMPLE PIMS REPORT TEMPLATE

Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program (EB THNP)

Grant: _____ Start Date: 09/01/2021 End Date: 08/31/2022 Report Date: _____
 Organization: _____
 Submitted Date: _____

4. Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty

Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty

Complete Form 3. Specialties and Services, by Site before inputting data in this form. Only unique patients seen and encounters occurring as the result of receiving EB THNP funding should be included. Real-Time Encounters are encounters that are live, two-way interactions between a person and a provider using audiovisual telecommunications technology. Store-and-Forward Encounters, also called asynchronous, are the transmission of health information through digital images or pre-recorded videos through electronic communication to a practitioner who uses the information to make an evaluation. Enter 0 if there is no data to report.

Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty

Originating Site	Setting	Specialty	Unique Patients	Number of Real-Time Encounters	Number of Store-and-Forward Encounters	Total Encounters

Total Unique Patients and Encounters	Number
Total Number of Unique Patients Served because of EBTHNP funding	
Total Number of Encounters because of EBTHNP funding	

4. Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty Form Comments

Is 4. Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty Form Complete?

4. Volume of Services, by Site and Specialty Form File Attachment

File Name	File Type	File Size	Upload Date

OMB Number: 0906-0043
 Expiration Date: 11/30/2022

Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program (EB THNP)

Grant: Start Date: 09/01/2021 End Date: 08/31/2022 Report Date:

Organization:

Submitted Date:

5. Patient Travel Miles Saved Form File Attachment			
File Name	File Type	File Size	Upload Date

OMB Number: 0906-0043
Expiration Date: 11/30/2022

Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program (EB THNP)

Grant: _____ Start Date: 09/01/2021 End Date: 08/31/2022 Report Date: _____
 Organization: _____
 Submitted Date: _____

6. Other Uses of the Telehealth Network

Other Uses of the Telehealth Network

Complete Form 5. Patient Travel Miles Saved before inputting data in this form. Only sessions that are eligible for and receiving EB THNP funding should be included. Enter 0 if there is no data to report. If information in 'Formal and Informal Education' is unknown enter 'DK'. Distance learning is the education, of a provider or other person, through electronic communication such as video conferencing.

Other Uses of the Telehealth Network	Number
Administrative Meetings	
Distance Learning	
Other - Specify:	

Distance Learning (Formal and Informal Education)

	Total Number of Sessions	Total Number of People
Formal Education (sessions are used to fulfill formal education, licensure or certification requirements)		
Informal Education (sessions used to meet regulatory practice requirements, as well as supervision/advice requested by remote practitioners)		

6. Other Uses of the Telehealth Network Form Comments

Is 6. Other Uses of the Telehealth Network Form Complete?

6. Other Uses of the Telehealth Network Form File Attachment

File Name	File Type	File Size	Upload Date

OMB Number: 0906-0043
 Expiration Date: 11/30/2022

Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program (EB THNP)

Grant: Start Date: 09/01/2021 End Date: 08/31/2022 Report Date:

Organization:

Submitted Date:

7. Diabetes

Diabetes

Complete Form 6. Other Uses of the Telehealth Network before inputting data in this form. Only patients seen and encounters occurring as a result of receiving EB THNP funding should be included. Enter 0 if there is no data to report.

Diabetes	Number
Number of unduplicated patients with diabetes served for at least three months during the reporting period	
Number of patients with diabetes (who received services for at least three months during the reporting period) whose most recent Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) level is 7.0% or less	
Number of patients with diabetes (who received services for at least three months during the reporting period) whose most recent Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) level is between 7.1% and 9.0%	
Number of patients with diabetes (who received services for at least three months during the reporting period) whose most recent Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) level during the measurement year was greater than 9.0% (poor control), or if an HbA1c test was not done during the reporting period	

7. Diabetes Form Comments

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Is 7. Diabetes Form Complete?	
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7. Diabetes Form File Attachment

File Name	File Type	File Size	Upload Date

OMB Number: 0906-0043
Expiration Date: 11/30/2022

Evidence-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Network Program (EB THNP)

Grant: **Start Date:** 09/01/2021 **End Date:** 08/31/2022 **Report Date:**

Organization:

Submitted Date:

8. Mental Health

Mental Health

Complete Form 7. Diabetes before inputting data in this form. Only sites that are eligible for and receiving EB THNP funding should be included. Enter 0 if there is no data to report.

Mental Health	Number
Number of sites that have access to mental health services where access did not exist prior to the EB THNP grant	
Number of sites that have access to mental health services for pediatric and adolescent populations where access did not exist prior to the EB THNP grant	
Number of sites that have access to mental health services for adult populations where access did not exist prior to the EB THNP grant	

8. Mental Health Form Comments

Is 8. Mental Health Form Complete?	
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8. Mental Health Form File Attachment

File Name	File Type	File Size	Upload Date

OMB Number: 0906-0043
Expiration Date: 11/30/2022



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