

Bringing Care Home: The Benefits of Telehealth in our Community

Liberty Library – May 26



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**NORTHEAST
TELEHEALTH**
RESOURCE CENTER **NETRC.org**

MCD
Global Health

Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC)



— THE —
University of Vermont
MEDICAL CENTER

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Disclosures and Acknowledgements:

- Any information provided by NETRC is for educational purposes only and should not be regarded as legal advice.
- I do not have any financial interest, arrangement, or affiliation with any organizations related to commercial products or services discussed in this session.
- Many thanks to colleagues throughout Maine, the region and beyond for your collaboration and sharing!

About Us:

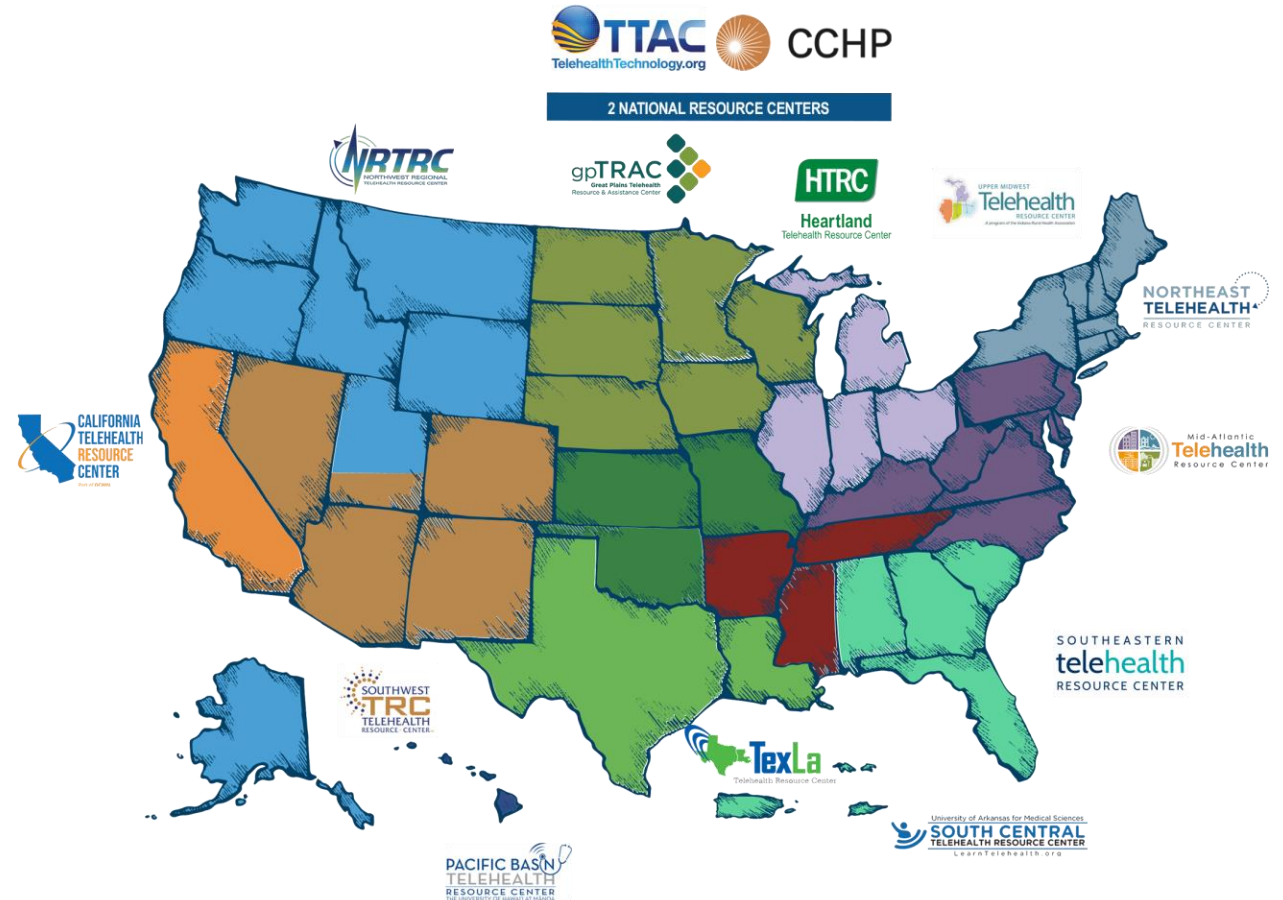
NETRC aims to increase access to quality health care services for rural and medically underserved populations through telehealth. We serve New England and New York and are a proud member of the National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers.

Our Mission

Foster the use of telehealth technologies to provide health care information and education for health care providers who serve rural and medically underserved areas and populations.

Our Aim

Connecting rural and underserved communities and helping them overcome geographic barriers to receive quality healthcare services.



Quick Poll

 **Raise your hand if you have:**

- Used a video call (Zoom, FaceTime, Teams)
- Heard of telehealth
- Used telehealth before

What We'll Cover Today

- What telehealth is
- How it works
- Benefits for you
- Common concerns
- How to get started



What is telehealth?

Telehealth = healthcare from home or a community location using phone, tablet or computer.

Connects us with healthcare providers when in-person care is not necessary or not possible.

Telehealth includes:

- Primary care or specialist appointments
- Counseling appointments
- Transmitting data to your provider electronically
- Communicating with your provider through a patient portal
- Group meetings (behavioral health, chronic disease management)



Let's Take a Look!



Why Telehealth Matters in Your Community

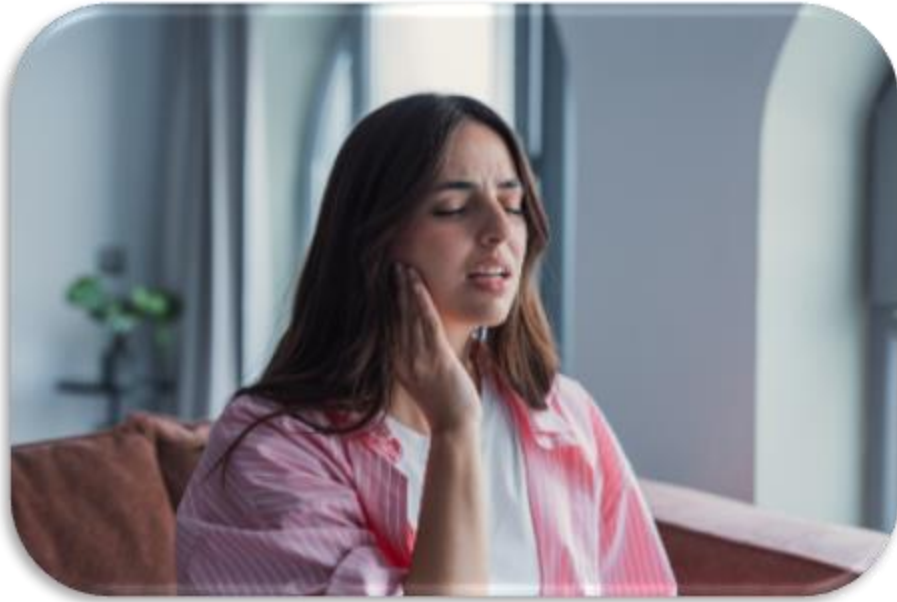
About 20% of Americans live in rural areas without easy access to specialty and other health care services

Telehealth:

- Saves patients time and money by cutting down on travel to distant provider locations
- Increases access to care and decreases wait times
- Can help address healthcare workforce shortage areas
- Makes appointments easier to keep - telehealth visits have significantly lower no-show rates



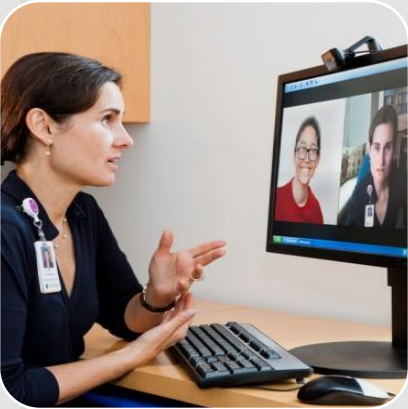
Key Benefits of Telehealth



Convenience (care from home):

- ✓ Faster access to care
- ✓ Less travel and cost
- ✓ Stay connected to your provider
- ✓ More privacy and less germs
- ✓ Care comes to you!

Most Common Types of Telehealth



Live Video Visits
(Synchronous)



Store And
Forward
(Asynchronous)



Remote Patient
Monitoring
(RPM)



Mobile Health
(mHealth)

And how
about
telephone?

Real Life Situations



Telehealth works well for:

- Follow-up visits
- Preventive Screenings and Health Management
- Medication check-ins
- Mental health support
- Minor illnesses



Quick poll: Which of these would you feel comfortable doing from home, or a community location?



When You Still Need In-Person Care

Some visits still require:

- Physical exams that require hands-on touch
- Lab tests
- Emergency care

Telehealth is an option, not a replacement for everything



What You Need

Simple setup:

- Phone, tablet, or computer
- Internet or phone service
- A quiet space (at home, library, etc.)



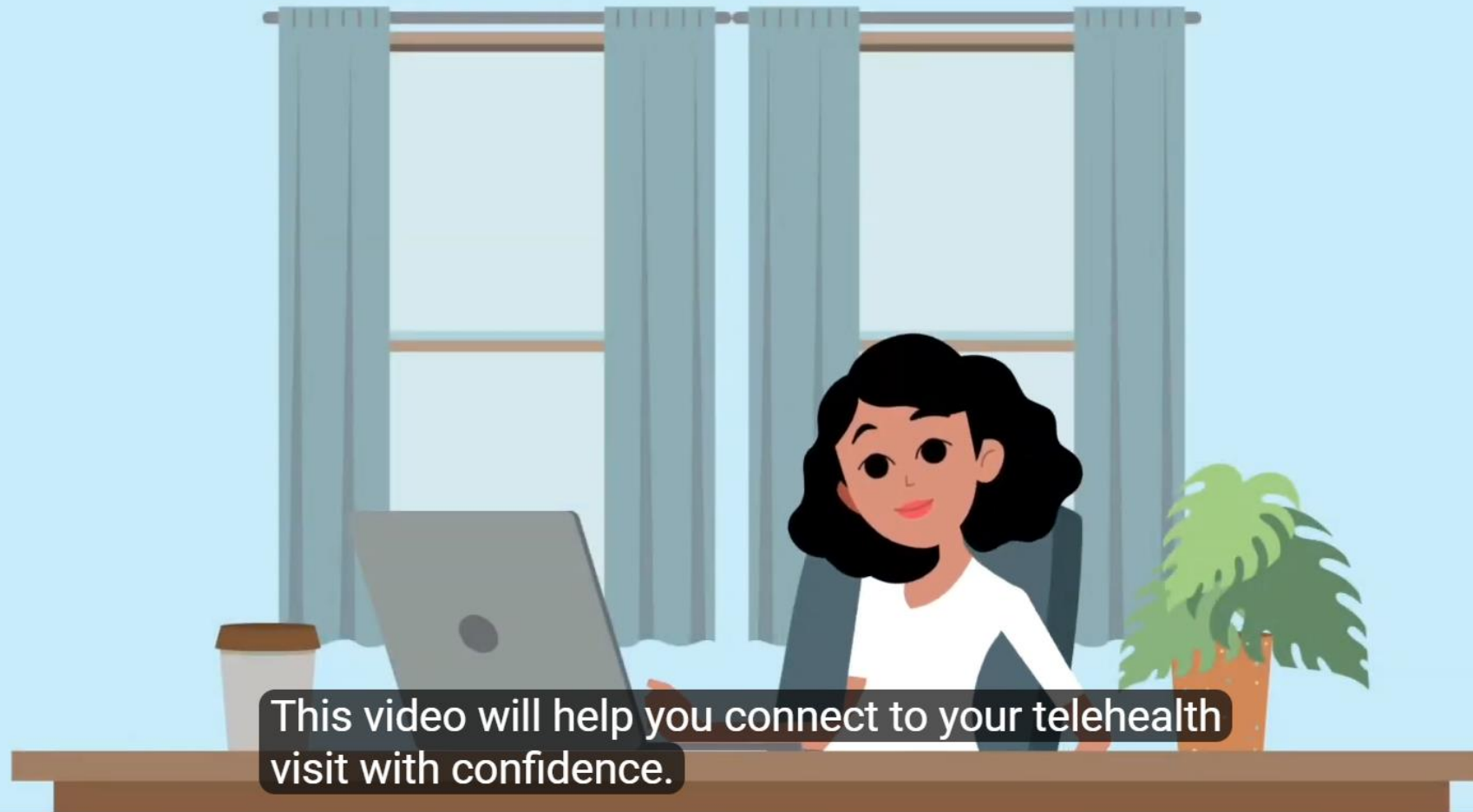
How a Telehealth Visit Works

- Schedule appointment
- Get a link or phone call
- Click the link or answer the call
- Talk with your provider



Let's See it in Action!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6p5awu5LxM&t=3s>



This video will help you connect to your telehealth visit with confidence.



Common Concerns

- “I’m not good with technology”
- “I don’t have internet”
- “I prefer in-person visits”
- “Is my information safe?”



Addressing Concerns



- ✓ Step-by-step help available
- ✓ Phone visits are often an option
- ✓ Many libraries/community sites offer internet
- ✓ Visits are private and secure

Privacy and Safety



Your visit is confidential

- Similar to in-office visits
- Protected by healthcare privacy laws
 - Healthcare organizations must use secure telehealth solutions
 - Providers must use technology in a way that protects your privacy/confidentiality

Telehealth Access Points

A telehealth access point, or TAP, is a dedicated public space for individuals to access a telehealth appointment.



TAPs can provide access to people who:

- Don't own a computer or internet-connected device
- Don't have high-speed internet
- Are uncomfortable with technology or have limited experience with digital tools
- Can't get to distant healthcare appointments for various reasons
- Who else?

Telehealth Access Points

These spaces have:

- An adequate internet connection for telehealth video visits
- A device with a working camera, speaker and microphone
- A dedicated room or kiosk where the telehealth visit can be conducted privately.

TAPs may also have support staff to assist an individual through a telehealth appointment, if needed.

A postcard for telehealth services. The top left features three yellow circles. The top right text reads "Now Available at Bridging the Gap!" followed by the word "TELEHEALTH" in large blue letters. A central circular image shows an older man in an orange shirt using a laptop. To the right of the image is a list of services with icons: "See a Doctor Easily" (person icon), "Speak With a Counselor" (head with gear icon), "Join Your Group Meetings" (group of people icon), "Medicine and Refills" (pill bottle icon), and "Manage Health Problems" (heart with pulse line icon). The bottom right contains contact information: "For more information, call 207-408-9255 or email BTGAppointments209@gmail.com". The bottom left features three yellow circles.

Now Available at Bridging the Gap!

TELEHEALTH

- See a Doctor Easily
- Speak With a Counselor
- Join Your Group Meetings
- Medicine and Refills
- Manage Health Problems

For more information, call 207-408-9255 or email BTGAppointments209@gmail.com

A social service agency in Maine recently added telehealth access to their list of services. Many of the people they work with are unhoused and do not have a cell phone. Without this TAP, telehealth would not be an option for them. This postcard is being distributed to their community in English and Arabic.

Digital Access and Telehealth



Video: <https://youtu.be/N6ZkOpMgvO0>



Tips for a Good Visit

Telehealth Visit Checklist *for adults*

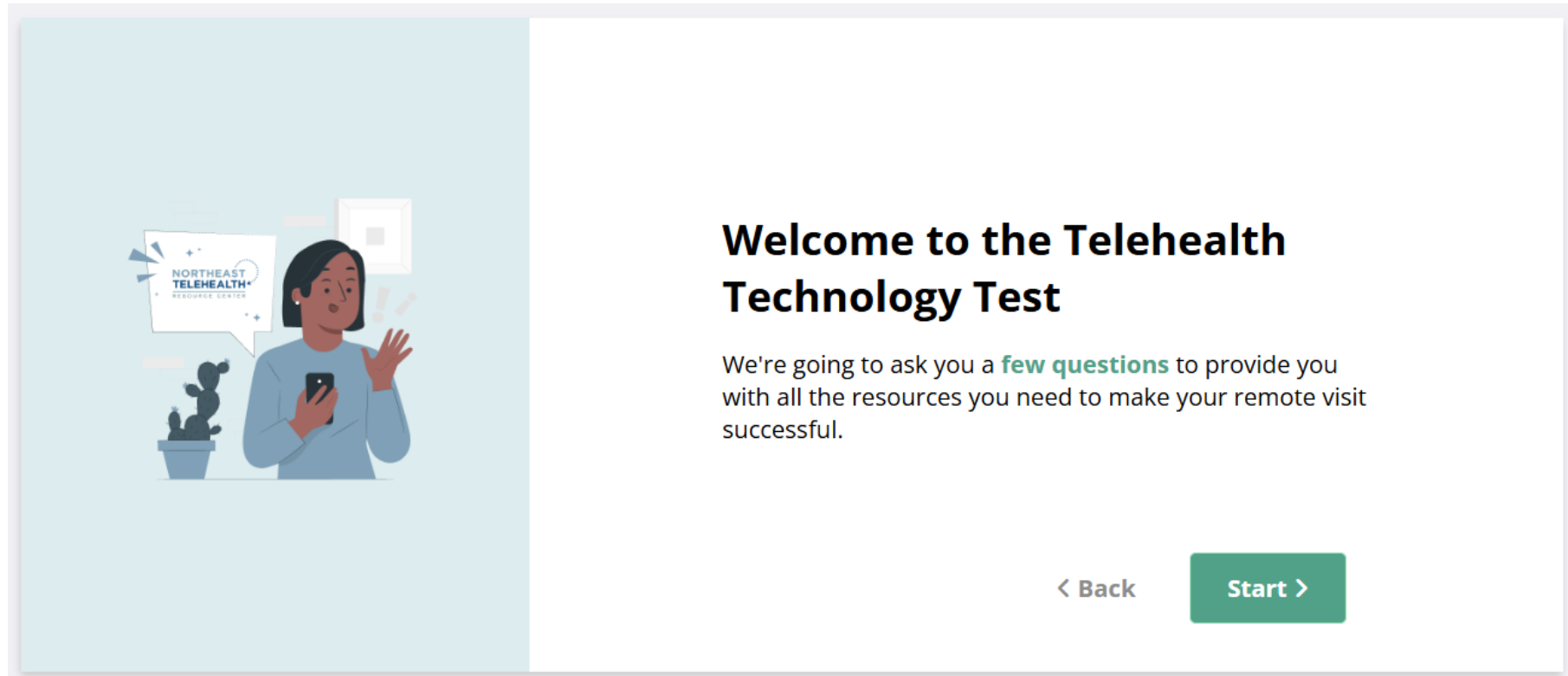
1 PREPARE YOUR TECHNOLOGY

- ☐ Make sure your computer, tablet, or smartphone is fully charged.
- ☐ Test your internet connection and make sure it's reliable.
- ☐ Download and open the telehealth app or platform your provider uses.
- ☐ Test your camera, microphone, and speakers, to ensure they work.
- ☐ Consider using headphones for clearer audio, if needed.



NETRC Telehealth Technology Tester

<https://netrc.org/prepare-for-visit.php>



Tips Continued...

2

SET UP YOUR HEALTH INFO

- ☐ List your current medications and how often you take them.
- ☐ Note your recent symptoms and health.
- ☐ Have a list of questions for your provider.
- ☐ Keep any recent test results or lab work handy and available.



**Do NOT
Drive and
Telehealth!!**

SET UP YOUR SPACE

- Find a quiet, well-lit room without distractions.
- Position yourself close enough to the camera so your provider can see you clearly.
- Make sure you have water or medications nearby, if needed.

4 INVITE HELP, IF NEEDED

- ☐ Ask a family member or caregiver to be nearby for support.
- ☐ Have someone assist you with setting up the technology if you are unfamiliar with it.

6 AFTER YOUR TELEHEALTH VISIT

- ☐ Confirm your next appointment or follow-up plan.
- ☐ Make sure you understand medication changes or new prescriptions.
- ☐ Ask how to reach your provider for questions later.
- ☐ Save any visit summaries or documents.

5 DURING YOUR TELEHEALTH VISIT

- ☐ Introduce yourself and confirm your name, date of birth, and location.
- ☐ Speak clearly and describe your symptoms fully.
- ☐ Show any relevant physical signs (like a rash) to the camera, if requested.
- ☐ Take notes on advice, instructions, or follow-up steps.

Tip: If you are new to telehealth, try a practice session with a friend the day before your appointment.



And What about AI??

AI (Artificial or Augmented Intelligence) is technology that helps computers **learn patterns and assist doctors and patients.**

👉 Think of it as a “smart helper” that supports healthcare providers.

💡 **Examples of How AI is Used in Telehealth**

- Helps schedule appointments→ Finds times and sends reminders
- Answers simple questions→ Chat tools can guide you before or after visits
- Supports doctors during visits→ Helps organize notes and medical information
- Monitors health at home→ Can track things like blood pressure or heart rate

What This Means for You...

- Faster responses

- More personalized care

- Less paperwork

- More time with your provider

👉 Would you feel comfortable using a 'smart helper' if it made getting care easier?



🤝 Important to Know: AI does NOT replace your provider.
You and your healthcare provider are always in charge of your care.

Local and Other Resources

Include:

- Liberty Library!!
- Local clinics offering telehealth
- Community health organizations
- Northeast Telehealth Resource Center
- Communications Resources for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind Patients (North Carolina):

[Patient Guidance](#)

[Telehealth Glossary](#)

[Accommodations Request Letter](#)



Final Reflection Poll

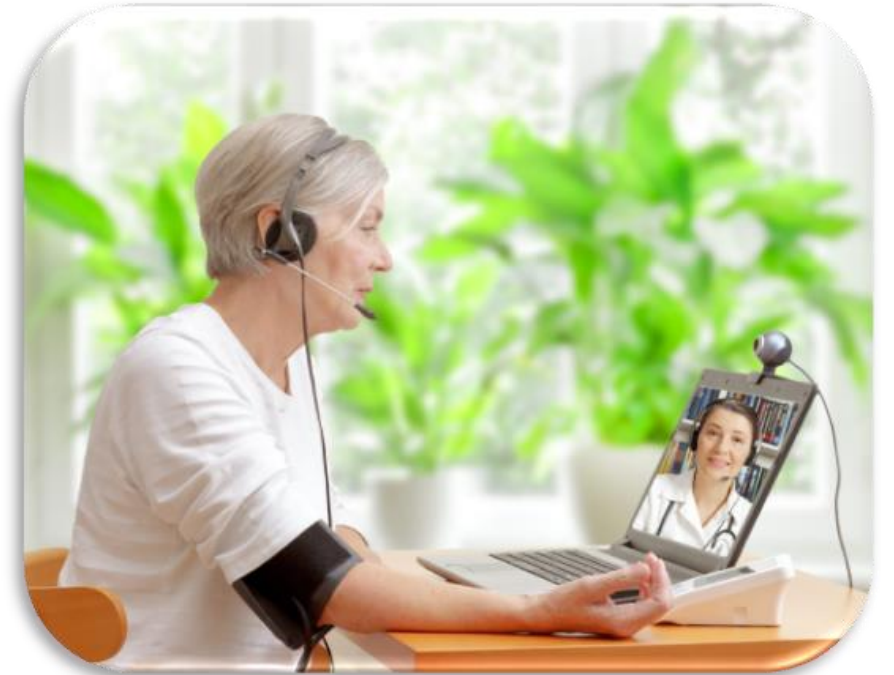
Would you try telehealth after today?

What would make you feel more comfortable?



Key Takeaways

- Telehealth brings care home
- It's simple and flexible
- You can start small
- Help is available!



More Resources – Devices and Training

- Lifeline Program – <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/> A federal program that provides a discount on qualifying monthly telephone or broadband internet service for eligible low-income consumers.
- Give IT. Get IT. - <https://giveitgetit.org/> Helps eligible individuals and nonprofit organizations get access to fast, high-quality computers and user support at the lowest cost possible. Available to legal residents of the states of ME, NH, MA and VT.
- National Digital Equity Center - <https://digitalequitycenter.org/> Works with communities to close the digital divide.
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance - <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/> Advances digital equity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act.

Digital Navigation and Skill Building Resources

- National Digital Equity Center - <https://digitalequitycenter.org/classes/> Digital skills training classes available online.
- Northstar Digital Literacy - <https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/> Digital literacy assessments and education.
- Navigating the Telehealth Neighborhood, A guide for digital navigators - <https://nrtrc.catalog.instructure.com/courses/navigating-the-telehealth-neighborhood-a-guide-to-telehealth-access-for-digital-navigators>
- National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Center's Digital Navigation Toolkit - <https://telehealthresourcecenter.org/resources/toolkits/digital-health-navigation-toolkit/>

Patient Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Telehealth webpage for patients – <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/patients>
- NETRC Telehealth Visit Checklist for Adults – [NETRC-Telehealth-Visit-Checklist-for-Older-Adults-2026](#)
- Telehealth Access for Seniors, Tech Guides for Patient Portals, devices, instructions and more! <https://www.telehealthforseniors.org/>



The ADA and Accessible Healthcare

ADA National Network: <https://adata.org/>

Information, guidance, and Training on the Americans with Disabilities Act

- Training calendar and previously recorded webinars: <https://adata.org/ada-training>
- Facility accessibility guidance: <https://adata.org/factsheet/accessible-health-care>
- Reasonable accommodations and effective communication:
<https://adata.org/factsheet/health-care-and-ada>

New England ADA Center: Call **1.800.949.4232** Email **ADAinfo@IHCDesign.org**

Questions?



**Want to learn more?
Contact us!**

**Phone: 800-379-2021
Email: netrc@mcd.org**

Thank You!