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# SCTA Quarterly Report

## CY23 Quarter 3

Progress Achieved on the CY2023 Strategic Plan  
July - September 2023

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## South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA)

### CY2023 Q3 Report

### Executive Summary

South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) partners showcased their telehealth success throughout the third quarter of calendar year 2023, (July 1 – September 30), collaboratively participating in [South Carolina's 7th Annual Telehealth Awareness Week \(TAW\)](#)! In alignment with the American Telemedicine Association's (ATA) National Telehealth Awareness Week, September 17-23, 2023 was recognized by SC Governor Henry McMaster as a week to reflect upon the impact of telehealth both statewide and nationally. The SCTA intends to continue hosting SC TAW for years to come, increasing awareness, education, and advocacy for telehealth services in our state.

Statewide telehealth advocacy remained a priority in CY23Q3 as the SCTA's new Rural and Primary Care Workgroup worked collaboratively to create a survey to assess the barriers to telehealth use for SC providers. Survey results will be examined and used to identify future telehealth priorities.

The following report provides additional details on the above accomplishments and others from **CY23Q3**.

#### **Looking ahead to CY23Q4:**

SCTA leadership will begin preparing for the 2024 legislative session to ensure a successful introduction of [House Bill 4159: Telehealth and Telemedicine Modernization Act](#) in the SC Senate's Medical Affairs Committee.

The SCTA looks forward to serving as a diamond sponsor during the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina, December 4-6, 2023, in Greenville, SC. Hosted by SCTA partner, Palmetto Care Connections (PCC), the Summit brings together leaders and professionals interested in increasing access to healthcare through telehealth.

SCTA partners will work collectively to identify telehealth strategic tactics for the coming year to finalize the CY2024 Statewide Strategic Plan.

# SOUTH CAROLINA Telehealth ALLIANCE

## South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) CY23Q3 Report

### **SCTA Statewide Strategy**

During CY23Q3, SCTA partners continued work toward advancing strategic tactics outlined in the [CY23 SCTA Statewide Strategic Plan](#). In preparation for drafting the CY2024 plan, SCTA clinical partners dedicated September to identifying anticipated 2024 telehealth deliverables. Together, these deliverables will help SCTA leadership formulate strategic tactics for CY2024 that encompass the great work of each SCTA partner. CY23Q4 will allow SCTA support partners time to review clinical strategic tactics and formulate their supporting tactics. A draft of the CY2024 SCTA Strategic Plan will be shared with the SCTA Advisory Council in November with a finalized plan submitted to SC DHHS in December.

### **Sustainability and Reimbursement Advocacy**

To assess SC's telehealth coverage and payment landscape, the SCTA Rural and Primary Care Workgroup created a survey to identify the barriers to telehealth use for SC providers. Survey results will be examined in CY23Q4 and shared with SC telehealth stakeholders to help identify future priorities.

In addition, SCTA leadership began outlining plans for 2024 legislative session preparation. [House Bill 4159: Telehealth and Telemedicine Modernization Act](#) will be introduced in the SC Senate's Medical Affairs Committee with hopes of enactment. The bill outlines the following regulatory goals:

1. **Introduce a new definition of "telehealth"** which includes all provider types, not only MDs and DOs, who are essential to a patient's care team in providing increased access to healthcare.
2. **Modernize telehealth prescribing language** to ensure SC patients can access life-saving treatment to combat the opioid epidemic in our state while maintaining important safeguards. Prescriptions of Schedule II and III narcotics are not permitted when a physician-patient relationship is established solely via telemedicine except when/for:
  - *Patient is in hospital being treated by a practitioner*
  - *When buprenorphine is prescribed for opioid use disorder*
  - *End of life care, and*
  - *Other exceptions authorized by the board*

### **SCTA Supported Technologies and Platforms**

The [SCTA's premium instance of Doxy.Me](#), a HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform, remained a free offering to SC providers. During CY23Q3, nearly 10,700 visits occurred and 57 new providers joined the instance.

SCTA partners began using the SCTA's new data collection software to record monthly telehealth utilization and telehealth sites in the state. This valuable tool will help paint a statewide picture of telehealth's current impact and identify areas of telehealth need.

**Medical University of South Carolina**  
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress  
July – September 2023

**Service Extension**

MUSC's Regional Telehealth Clinics continued to expand during CY23Q3 with the addition of two new providers for bariatric surgery. New anticipated services include audiology cochlear implants and transplant cardiology. MUSC's service extension team continues to bring high-value telehealth services to patients in their local communities to provide easier access to care.

The Virtual Specialty Program, offering patients quick access to specialty care, continued to expand during the quarter. In addition to its existing rheumatology and endocrinology services, the program began offering benign hematology services with a focus on sickle cell disease to increase access for this underserved and at-risk patient population. The program will continue to grow in Q4 with additional services already in the queue!

**Hospital Support**

The hospital support telehealth team continued to introduce new services and initiatives during CY3Q3. Planning for the expansion of inpatient cardiology consultation services at MUSC Black River Medical Center in collaboration with MUSC Florence cardiology providers began during the quarter. Additionally, a new virtual nursing service was introduced and training and education is underway for its intended sites.

The expansion of the tele-neuroscience program offered new specialized services and the development of expanding consultations. Currently, the team is working to scale the tele-neuroendovascular service and create a tele-neuro critical care offering for partnering sites.

MUSC's tele-ICU team continued to seek enhancement opportunities through the ICU Innovations program which provides continued training and education to providers. The team also implemented personalized resources aligned with critical care needs for MUSC tele-ICU sites and began planning site visits to some regional divisions.

**Convenient Care**

MUSC's Virtual Urgent Care (VUC) program focused its efforts on implementing best practices and fostering strong collaborations with its college and university health partners. This approach prioritized convenience, accessibility, and informed support to make VUC a preferred healthcare option for students. Key strategies identified to enhance partnerships consist of developing unique marketing materials, streamlining the user experience, and increasing virtual health education.

The VUC team also conducted research analyses during the quarter focused on health equity promotion in socially vulnerable populations, specifically in Williamsburg County. Through ongoing efforts, the VUC team plans to continue evaluations toward identifying and overcoming barriers to the use of virtual care.

### **Primary Care Support**

MUSC's new psychiatric collaboration of care model (CoCM) continued to receive new referrals throughout the quarter from four participating MUSC primary care locations (Lexington, Lake City, Florence, and Lancaster). This program leverages a behavioral health care manager who is overseen by a consulting psychiatrist. Due to its ongoing success, the team plans to soon expand services to the Pee Dee region.

MUSC's outpatient teleconsultation (OT) program for psychiatry received (again) a record number of referrals and appointments during the quarter. Even with the increased demand, new and returning patients are seen by a provider with less wait time compared to national statistics.

### **Health Equity**

MUSC's school-based team kicked off the start of the 2023/2024 school year with upgraded, smaller-footprint telehealth equipment in all participating schools. The team, along with a new nurse educator have been working in partnership with MUSC's telehealth technology team to ensure schools are trained and prepared to see students. School nurses have already begun providing positive feedback on the equipment's enhancements.

MUSC's school-based behavioral health program went live during CY23Q3, implementing therapy and psychiatry telehealth services to Charleston County schools. The team plans to continue implementation, starting with schools participating in the MUSC school-based telehealth physical health program. Statewide expansion will continue to progress as the team fulfills requests from schools and districts for these services.

The [Mom's IMPACTT](#) program at MUSC continued to improve access to maternal mental health and substance use disorder care through telehealth. During Q3, the program expanded services to Edgefield County achieving a huge milestone of ***reaching patients in all 46 counties of the state!***

MUSC's [Telehealth for the Homeless](#) program continued its work to analyze a needs assessment for children experiencing homelessness, while also enhancing primary care services to include preventative cancer screenings including breast, lung, and cervical cancer.

# McLeod Health

## The Choice for Medical Excellence

### McLeod Health / SCTA CY2023 Q3 Report

July - September 2023

#### Service Extension Programs:

- **McLeod** – Focus on increasing outpatient tele services (specialty/primary care) through Epic and MyChart transition (go-live Dec 2022).
- Focus on optimization of Multidisciplinary Rounds program through Epic Multiparty Video Visits.
- Focus on operationalizing outpatient Cardiothoracic program.

#### Hospital Support Programs:

- **McLeod** – Focus on operationalizing a new vascular specialty care program needed for ED patients and inpatients for smaller community hospitals to increase access to vascular specialty care.
- Focus on operationalizing a Remote Sitter program to increase patient safety and reduce hospital costs.
- Focus on optimization for the Children’s Hospital Specialty Consultations program to increase accessibility to specialty care and decrease unnecessary transfers.
- Focus on optimizing outpatient Palliative Care program to increase accessibility to care in multiple counties.

#### Direct-to-Consumer Programs:

- **McLeod** – Focus on assessing for optimizations and increased utilization.

#### Primary Care & Outpatient Programs:

- **McLeod** – Focus on Primary Care site surveys for technology readiness and workflow training (to include MyChart, HIPPA, Best Practices etc.)

#### Health Equity Programs:

- **McLeod** – Focus on onboarding the new Nurse Practitioner with focus on assessment of the School Based Care program needs to include chronic care management for students and staff.

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*McLeod Regional Medical Center • McLeod Darlington • McLeod Dillon • McLeod Loris • McLeod Seacoast • McLeod Health Cheraw  
McLeod Behavioral Health Services • McLeod Physician Associates • McLeod Family Medicine Center*



Prisma Health  
Telehealth Service Updates and Progress  
**Q3 July - September 2023**

**Service Extension**

Prisma Health continues to support and broaden the use of core virtual care modalities in our ambulatory settings to extend the reach of services. Our visits increased by a 3<sup>rd</sup> in volume for August and September. This is in part due to the focus the team spent this quarter around improving the experience for the providers giving the care. The work done was to replace outdated headsets and share with practices a workflow that incorporates the CMA to ensure a better overall experience for the patients and the providers. Business case development is moving forward with a virtual front door to reopen the 24-hour virtual support and ensure patients have easier access to virtual care after hours. The work has begun to build out this business group who's focus will be on assisting patients via eConsult or virtual consult.

The Prisma Health behavioral health group has been working to get new carts out to different practices, programs, and working to offer services to skill nursing facilities to ensure continuation of mental health for those who are treated inpatient and then released to skill nursing facilities. The goal is to improve transition between care facilities. We are expanding this to three new sites with go-lives targeted for mid- November.

**Hospital Support**

Prisma Health Virtual Care Partners (VCP) installed 41 new rooms this past quarter at our Toumey location with targeted go-live to occur in early November. This will increase our support for patients in rural areas of Sumter SC. This new equipment is set up in the rooms and can be leveraged by providers, nurses, dietary, education, and any other specialty. The goal of the VCP is to expand the ability of specialty group to assist in keeping the patients in Sumter rather than having to transfer them to Columbia. Four new carts have been setup for our infectious disease providers that will be deployed to our Easley and Oconee locations to aid in an increase of virtual visits for this specialty. Due to demand, they could no longer continue to share a consult cart with neurology and cardiology. For those two groups cart scheduling inside of Epic was created to help neurology and cardiology continue to coordinate with their existing cart.

Our new partnership with Mayo Clinic provides tele-neurology sessions which kicked off 1<sup>st</sup> of August and we've had 7 newborns receive care from this group across our system. With our partnership to leverage Mayo we are currently investigating new carts that allow for a boom arm. This will allow the provider to get better visual on baby in a bassinet. Our Stroke program is investigating installing in-room equipment for our CT areas to allow for quicker tele-stroke responds, enabling TPA to be given in the CT room post scan to ensure the best outcomes for our patients. We are investigating upgrading our cart fleet as the carts we currently have on the acute side are out of date and vendor has the devices at end of life.

For our Pediatric acute areas, we've put in a new mini cart. This is aiding our Oconee system to get more specialty coverage. Our eating disorder program has added an RD/specialist who will be working with our pediatrician inpatients. We are putting together a program that will provide inpatient care and telesitter support for the stay. This program received a cart that will be utilized with our telesitter program. In the Upstate market, inpatient we've added tytocare hospital setup for high-risk kids. Based on the results of this pilot, information will be utilized to evaluate a similar program for the Midlands market. We have added back virtual health operational coordinator who will provide proactive training and support for both markets.



**Convenient Care**

Prisma Health's initiatives supporting convenient care are centered around primary solutions including clinical chatbots, outreach, eVisits and wayfinding embedded in patient reminders. This past quarter worked through a few roadblocks for converting eVisits into virtual visits when needed to ensure improved examinations. We are currently working with EMR vendor to move through those roadblocks and looking to start up the program after the holidays. Our chatbots this quarter have worked with 4,036 patients, primarily focusing on diabetics and pediatrics needing guidance for healthy lifestyles.

**Primary Care Support**

Prisma Health offers a variety of services for chronic condition management and remote patient monitoring. Prisma Health continues to support approximately 10,000 patients under some variation of ambulatory remote patient monitoring services, allowing us to better support and coordinate care outside the direct hospital system. We are currently evaluating platforms to assist with at-risk pregnancies and help postpartum mothers with monitoring of blood pressure and mental health. We are working with two clinics to outline the use cases and make these programs a reality.

**Health Equity**

Prisma Health continues to promote health equity by supporting virtual care initiatives at schools, community outreach centers and satellite clinics for specialty care. Currently, we are evaluating the need for mental health support that could be provided virtually via our school nurse programs.



# *State of South Carolina*

## *Department of Mental Health*

### **MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION:**

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### South Carolina Department of Mental Health Telehealth Service Updates and Progress **Q3 July - September 2023**

#### **Service Extension**

DMH's Community Telepsychiatry program helps increase access to mental healthcare by providing telepsychiatry services through 60 Mental Health Centers and satellite clinics statewide. DMH has helped patients in the state access specialized mental health care services, including child and adolescent psychiatry, since 2013.

In the third quarter of 2023, over 16,100 services, which is approximately 42% of overall mental health services provided by MDs and APRNs, are telepsychiatry. DMH's Community Telepsychiatry program serves patients in a wide variety of settings from Mental Health Centers and satellite clinics to schools and RV mobile clinics.

#### **Hospital Support**

DMH's Emergency Department (ED) Telepsychiatry program expanded to 27 hospital partners across the state and is in the process of adding new partners. In Q3 of calendar year 2023, the ED Telepsychiatry program provided over 1,500 completed consults for patients in EDs statewide. Psychiatric care is available through the ED program 17 hours per day, 364 days per year.

#### **Primary Care Support**

DMH's Integrated Care team has continued progress on the HRSA grant (American Rescue Plan Act – Pediatric Mental Health Care Access New Area Expansion) to develop the state's first child psychiatry access network to support the provision of mental health care by primary care providers. The network was named the Youth Access to Psychiatry Program (YAP-P). The goal is to provide a continuum of supports to SC primary care providers who see children and youth ages 0-21 years. YAP-P provides resources to practices and providers in Barnwell County in conjunction with the Aiken-Barnwell Mental Health Center.

Funding began in the fall of 2021 for the 5-year grant. YAP-P also received a \$300,000 expansion award in the fall of 2022 from HRSA to look at expanding the network to include school-based health centers (SBHCs).

## **Health Equity**

DMH's partnership continues with the SC Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to provide child telepsychiatry services to DJJ minors with mental health concerns in secure facilities. This partnership helps address the mental health needs of children involved with the juvenile justice system. To facilitate evaluation and treatment, there is an APRN onsite to support the remote DMH child and adolescent psychiatrist.

In addition, DMH launched an interagency consultation service with the SC Department of Social Services (DSS) and DJJ to furnish telepsychiatry to at risk children and adolescents. Children referred by DJJ for this program are not located in secure facilities. This innovative collaboration among state agencies promotes cooperative working relationships to make the best use of state resources for a high needs population.



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October 11, 2023

The SC Area Health Education Consortium has focused on ensuring up-to-date telehealth education resources are available on-demand for all health professionals and future health professionals in South Carolina. SCTA funding has helped to support SC AHEC's Office for Telehealth Education in developing and supporting online telehealth courses and seven additional telehealth programs including Palmetto Care Connection's Webinar Wednesday and SC AHEC developed programming available for free for health professionals and students in South Carolina via the [SC AHEC online learning portal](#).

The educational programs listed below support the Supporting Tactical Goal, Education and Training within the CY2023 SCTA Statewide Strategic Plan.

SC AHEC Course Registrations and Course Completers  
(Date range 7/1/2023-9/30/2023)

1. [Telehealth](#) for High School and College Students – 21 New Registrations, **14 Completers**
2. [Telehealth Presenter Certification](#) – 51 New Registrations, **43 Completers**
3. [Telemental Health](#) – 32 New Registrations, **29 Completers**
4. [Foundations of Telehealth](#) – 90 New Registrations, **88 Completers**
5. [Telehealth Implementation](#) – 27 New Registrations, **27 Completers**

**201 Individuals Successful Competed a telehealth module** during July-September 2023.



October 18, 2023

South Carolina ETV  
Calendar Year 2023 Quarter 3 Report  
South Carolina Telehealth Alliance

During the third quarter of 2023 the *SCETV Telehealth* Team supported the SCTA by creating and promoting new content for Telehealth Awareness Week. Our TAW Social Media toolkit included new videos and graphics to promote telehealth awareness. Through our TAW social media campaign, we shared important information about the impact of telehealth programs in South Carolina. In addition, four telehealth radio stories aired on SC Public Radio during the week of TAW.

Two new videos were published in August. The first spotlighted Prisma Health's success with its virtual care partnership program. A second video featured McLeod Regional Medical Center's tele-psychiatry program which is a lifeline to psychiatric patients living in rural areas of the state.

In July we had the honor of interviewing Dr. Rick Foster for a video about his journey with telehealth for palliative care. As an advocate of telehealth, Dr. Foster devoted himself to improving access to healthcare for his fellow South Carolinians. It was our privilege to capture his personal experience with telehealth.

List of telehealth features:

**Video**

- [Doctor Becomes Patient, Shares Experience with Telehealth](#)
- [Virtual Evaluations Improve Access to Psychiatric Care](#)
- [Virtual Mentoring and Partnership Creates Support Network for Nurses](#)
- [Telehealth Improves Access to Quality Health Care](#)
- [Awareness Week Highlights Value of Telehealth](#)

**Radio**

- [My Telehealth: Virtual Evaluations Improve Access to Psychiatric Care](#)
- [My Telehealth: Virtual Counseling Helps Mother Overcome Trauma](#)
- [My Telehealth: How Telehealth Is Used By Local Boards of Disabilities and Special Needs](#)
- [My Telehealth: Paramedics Make Housecalls](#)

This content is shared via television, email newsletters, multiple websites, and social media platforms.

**Social Media spotlight:** The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance Facebook page reach is up 18% from Q2 and has two new likes. Our post reach was up a whopping 94% and post engagement was up 32% from Q2. The top performing post was an announcement about TAW. On Twitter, the SCTA page tweet impressions are up 54%.

**In Your Inbox:** The SCTA's monthly newsletter held an average open rate of 35% for Q2, up 5% compared to Q1. The click rate was 6.5% which is up from Q1.

**YouTube Spotlight:** The video featuring Dr. Foster's personal journey with telehealth for palliative care was viewed more than 355 times on YouTube.

# CENTER FOR RURAL AND PRIMARY HEALTHCARE

*from Evidence to Impact*

## SCTA CY23 Q3 Report SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare

### Telehealth Hubs

The CRPH community team continues to work with library staff regarding digital inclusion initiatives. Over the summer, CRPH met with Orangeburg Library, the most primed for telehealth implementation. CRPH community team began working with Orangeburg to identify and execute any upfitting of selected space and provide resources. Since these discussions, the social worker who led the majority of the efforts of this work accepted a new position with a new organization. This has caused a delay in the project, but our community team has recently received an update that the hiring process for a replacement has begun.

This summer, we collected qualitative data on library patrons' attitudes and perceptions regarding accessing telehealth through libraries. The work was led by an NIH Summer Fellow, who is also drafting a paper with the findings. Below is a summary of the methods and key findings:

#### Methods

- Connected with library social workers and community health workers
- Utilized REDCAP to administer the survey
- Convenience Sample
- Tabled Survey at partner libraries and asked patrons to participate

#### Results (45 respondents)

- 1) The majority of survey participants would use telehealth services if they were offered at their library.
- 2) Patrons who said they would use telehealth services in the library described their ideal space as a quiet room with internet access and help with medical devices and technology.
- 3) The main concern about telehealth was privacy, "public space, too quiet. Private information could be assumed."

These results have been helpful in discussions as we move libraries toward implementation and will inform an implementation guide on what would make a location successful. Barriers were identified on a system level to implementing telehealth in libraries; however, our team is actively working to overcome these.

### Telehealth and Primary Health Workgroup

The Center continues to partner with PCC to lead the SCTA Primary Care and Rural Health Workgroup to explore learning needs and resources necessary to support the growth and optimization of telehealth by primary care and rural practices. The Workgroup is comprised of multiple stakeholders: SCORH, SCPHA, SC AHEC, Prisma, SC CRPH, SCTA, Clemson, and Tandem. While currently, the focus of the group is increasing the response rate of the SCTA Telehealth Survey, the group has also served as an advisory group for projects currently active using telehealth. For example, the alternate access points to care work may have found a new provider connection through this group. This could potentially connect senior adults to a primary care provider through virtual visits. We are working with PCC to create the direction (topics) for 2024 and expanding on the discussions we've had so far.



## **SCTA CY23 Q3 Report Palmetto Care Connections**

### **Broadband & Technology Infrastructure**

As the leader of the South Carolina Broadband Consortium, Palmetto Care Connections has helped health care providers in South Carolina save more than \$45 million since 2013.

### **Training & Education**

Palmetto Care Connections is the host of Webinar Wednesdays and the Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina. PCC is partnering with the SC Telehealth Alliance to continue the 2023 Pediatric Telehealth webinar series. The next webinar is scheduled for November 8, 2023. The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Telehealth Summit of South Carolina will be at the Hyatt Regency in Greenville, SC, on December 4-6, 2023. At the Summit, PCC will host an awards ceremony to recognize leaders across the state in the areas of telehealth clinical care, technology, legislation, and more.

During Telehealth Awareness Week (September 17-23), PCC announced its partnership with the SC Department on Aging to place telehealth carts in local senior centers across the state. PCC will conduct site assessments at up to 18 rural senior centers to determine each office's telehealth readiness and broadband capabilities. Each office will then receive a telehealth cart for area seniors to use for telehealth visits. The carts, provided by PCC for deployment, would be available for those who may otherwise not have adequate access to health care. PCC rounded out Telehealth Awareness Week in South Carolina by celebrating the launch of telehealth services in partnership with the Marion County Library System at the Nichols Branch Library. Telehealth services will be available to the library's patrons and public.

PCC is partnering with the Medical University of South Carolina to increase the telehealth workforce in South Carolina. PCC will provide train the trainer digital literacy workshops.

PCC co-chairs the Rural and Primary Care Telehealth Workgroup with the SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare. A survey was sent out to health care providers in SC to learn more about their telehealth needs to include reimbursement. In Q4, the group plans to review the data collected from the survey.