



# FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

## THE LATEST IN TELEHEALTH NEWS



**UMTRC  
NEWS**

## **FOCUS ON HEART HEALTH**

Each February marks American Heart Month, serving as a critical period for raising awareness about cardiovascular disease (CVD), which poses a higher risk for women due to unique physiological risks, including smaller coronary arteries, thinner ventricular walls, and a lower red blood cell counts.

The UMTRC is focused on educating our networks on how to be “heart smart” during American Heart Month, as well as how the women closest to us can prevent heart disease. So, women, “know your numbers,” such as total cholesterol, blood pressure, and fasting blood glucose; as well as the signs of a cardiac event so you can reduce your risk of a cardiac emergency and ensure you are heart smart!

Antonia Sawyer, MS.

**Program Director, UMTRC**



## **PODCAST**

### **This month on A Virtual View...**

Danielle speaks with RN Sara Lewis, the Director of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health Services at Major Health Partners, and NP Nicole Neisler to learn more about their work with remote patient monitoring and cardiovascular health.

[Listen on YouTube!](#)



## NEW RESOURCES

### [This American Heart Month Revisit our Acute Care Toolkit!](#)

*“Acute care refers to the short-term, immediate treatment of patients with severe or urgent medical conditions. It is typically provided in a hospital setting, such as an emergency department, intensive care unit (ICU), or other specialized units, and focuses on addressing serious health issues that require prompt medical attention. Acute care involves the diagnosis, treatment, and stabilization of illnesses, injuries, or conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, respiratory distress, fractures, and infections.”*

[Read More!](#)

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## HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

### American Heart Month

American Heart Month, observed each February, highlights the ongoing impact of cardiovascular disease as a leading cause of death in the United States. From a telehealth standpoint, this observance underscores the critical role virtual care plays in prevention, early detection, and long-term management of heart conditions. Through remote patient monitoring, virtual check-ins, and digital health tools, providers can track blood pressure, heart rate, weight, and other key indicators in real time—helping identify risks before they become emergencies. Telehealth also reduces barriers such as transportation, time off work, and geographic distance, making it easier for patients in rural and underserved communities to access cardiology consultations and primary care support.

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## WEBINARS

### [Webinar On-Demand: Medication safety, Telehealth, & Medicare: Opportunities to Reduce Older Adult Preventative Harm](#)

View our [on-demand webinar](#) – join the Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center for a webinar presented by the Partnership for a Connected Illinois (PCI) intended to help patients and providers understand the importance of avoiding over-prescribing and how to avoid medication errors.



ONLINE  
**Webinar**  
MEDICATION  
SAFETY,  
TELEHEALTH  
AND MEDICARE  
OPPORTUNITIES TO  
REDUCE OLDER ADULT  
PREVENTABLE HARM

02.26.2026  
2:00 PM EST

presented by:  
Partnership for a Connected Illinois  
broadbandillinois.org



## More Events

- [Lunch & Learn - Security by Design: Protecting Rural Healthcare Facilities through CPTED Principles – March 11th](#)
  - [Connecting Care at Scale: How Georgia Built a Statewide Telehealth Network – March 12th](#)
  - [Increasing Access to Specialist Expertise in Rural Maine Via Virtual Curbside Consults – March 25th](#)
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## NEWS UPDATES

### ENews Updates – Renewed Flexibilities Passed by Congress

*In early February 2026, Congress passed and the President signed the [Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026](#), which included a key provision extending many of the Medicare telehealth flexibilities that had been set to expire at the end of January. This extension allows Medicare beneficiaries to continue accessing a wide range of telehealth services — including virtual visits from home without geographic restrictions and other COVID-era waivers — through December 31, 2027, providing crucial stability for patients and providers who rely on virtual care. The move helps avert what advocates had warned could be a “telehealth cliff,” giving time for more permanent telehealth policy solutions to be developed.*

*In addition to the Medicare extension, other telehealth flexibilities have also been maintained this year. For example, federal agencies renewed rules allowing certain prescriptions for controlled substances [via telemedicine](#) — letting patients receive these prescriptions virtually without a prior in-person visit — through at least the end of 2026. These ongoing extensions reflect continued recognition by policymakers of the importance of virtual access to care for rural populations, patients with chronic conditions, and others for whom in-person visits can be barriers to consistent treatment*

### Newsletter Information

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**Email Subject: Talking about Heart Health with the UMTRC**