



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

THE LATEST IN TELEHEALTH NEWS



UMTRC
NEWS

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

The conclusion of October, recognized as National Health Literacy Month, coincides with the spooky observance of Halloween. This presents a unique opportunity to underscore the often-unrecognized application of health literacy within communities during this candy-centric tradition. While the concept of health literacy may not be at the forefront of our minds amidst "Trick-or-Treat" activities, Halloween serves as a relatable context to illustrate the critical importance of processing health-related information, applying it to make informed decisions, and ultimately fostering improved health outcomes for families. This includes practical applications such as knowing how to read nutrition labels, potential health risk related to certain foods, and even basic dietary recommendations for sweet treats.

As communities across the UMTRC region celebrate Halloween and the rest of the holiday season, we remain dedicated to highlighting the need for continued health literacy education, and to addressing identified health literacy gaps within the telehealth space.

Best,

Antonia Sawyer, MS.
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PODCAST EPISODE

A Virtual View is back!

In this episode, Danielle sits down with **Christina Hage, Plan President and CEO of Managed Health Services (MHS)**, to explore the vital role of health literacy in improving community health. Join us for a discussion of how digital health tools and telehealth are empowering patients to better understand and manage their own care — and how these innovations are helping to close health gaps in rural communities across the state.

Listen on [Spotify](#) or [Youtube](#) today!



BLOG POST

Making Telehealth Understandable for Every Patient: Health Literacy Strategies for Providers

“Health literacy - the ability to find, understand, and use health information - directly affects whether patients can follow through on care plans. When it comes to telehealth, this also means knowing how to use technology confidently. Research shows that low digital health literacy is linked to poorer health outcomes and decreased engagement in care. This health literacy month, the UMTRC is diving into how providers can use simple strategies to ensure that every patient is able to engage with information about their own health through telehealth.”

[Read More](#)

NEW RESOURCES

Our friends at the Center for Connected Health Policy have put together two new resources for telehealth stakeholders this fall. See more information below:

State Summary Chart, Telehealth Laws and Reimbursement Policies, Fall 2025

“This chart provides a quick reference summary of each state’s telehealth policy on Medicaid reimbursement, private payer reimbursement laws (both if a law exists and whether or not payment parity is required), and professional requirements around interstate compacts and consent based on information gathered between late May and early September 2025.”

Telehealth Policies & Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) Fact Sheet, Fall 2025

“The Fall 2025 Edition of the findings within CCHP’s Policy Finder summarizes the updated information and examples of policy trends for Spring 2024. The focus on Medicaid policies pertaining to FQHCs is driven by the intricate criteria and requirements in which FQHCs must adhere. The FQHC category aims to capture this information in a consolidated way to help FQHCs navigate telehealth Medicaid policy across the United States. “

HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Health Literacy Month

October is Health Literacy Month—a time to recognize the vital role that clear communication plays in improving health outcomes. For telehealth providers, health literacy is especially important. Patients who understand their care instructions, digital tools, and health information are more likely to engage in their own care and use telehealth effectively.

By simplifying language, offering visual aids, and checking for understanding, providers can ensure that all patients—regardless of background or digital skill level—can confidently navigate virtual visits. Promoting health literacy isn’t just about communication; it’s about building trust, improving access, and empowering patients to take an active role in their health.

EVENTS

23rd Annual IRHA Public Policy Forum

Join the [Indiana Rural Health Association's Public Policy Forum](#) for key conversations shaping rural health in Indiana.

Hear updates from [FSSA Secretary Mitch Roob](#), national insights from Brock Slabaugh, and a look at the future of public health from [Health Commissioner Dr. Weaver](#)—plus dialogue with leaders on the policies that matter most to your community.

Be part of the conversation.



More Events

- [Burnout & Telemental Health: Re-Connecting to Ourselves while Connecting to Others – November 20th](#)
- [TeleBehavioral Health 2025: Does Modality Matter? Comparing the Quality of Mental Health Care Delivered by Video, Phone, and In-person – November 21st](#)

NEWS UPDATES

Pause to Telehealth Flexibilities Continues During Government Shutdown

In our previous newsletter, we wrote about the ways that the federal government shutdown would impact telehealth services. Since then, the shutdown has continued, and flexibilities have been suspended.

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers has created an additional fact sheet with information for our telehealth stakeholders – you can view the [Medicare Waiver Expiration & Telehealth FAQs](#) today for more information and guidance.

The UMTRC and our other consortium members are here if you have additional questions related to this or any other telehealth-related legislation.

More Telehealth and Health News

National

- [Hospitals, health systems stop Medicare telehealth appointments amid government shutdown](#)
- [Rush Health Launches National Direct-to-Consumer Telehealth Membership](#)

Indiana

- [VA Northern Indiana Health Care System seeks food donations for veterans as SNAP lapses](#)
- [Community leaders unite to tackle maternal health issues in Indianapolis](#)

Illinois

- [Algonquin 1st town in Illinois to offer tele-health services; residents must opt out to avoid monthly \\$6 fee](#)
- [Shutdown forces Medicare patients off popular telehealth and hospital-at-home programs](#)

Michigan

- Michigan nonprofit to end youth mental health program, cutting 154 jobs
- [University of Michigan Health Sparrow opens new comprehensive breast center to streamline cancer care](#)

Ohio

- [What to know about Ohio's new law making virtual vet visits easier for pet owners](#)
- [OhioHealth, Nationwide Children's to open family care center in Richland County](#)

Newsletter Information

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