

National Headquarters
2231 Crystal Drive, Suite 450
Arlington, VA 22202
(202) 371-9090

Regional Office
600 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 1000
Atlanta, GA 30308
(202) 371-9090

www.astho.org
@ASTHO

December 14, 2017

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), with the support of the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), is pleased to invite you to participate in a telehealth learning community. This technical assistance (TA) opportunity will focus on supporting states and territories in their health transformation activities and encouraging the adoption of emerging strategies to improve population health, such as telehealth. Specific activities will focus on developing statewide telehealth strategies, integrating telehealth into strategic planning, and addressing barriers to implementation of telehealth programs. Lessons learned from these activities will be synthesized into resources to support other states and territories.

Background

Advances in technology have enabled innovative programs to use telehealth to deliver services to underserved and rural areas for the past several decades. With the rapid diffusion of health information technology, wider expansion of these programs is possible. Currently, many opportunities exist to leverage telehealth to improving access to preventative and specialty care and address health disparities affecting vulnerable populations, while also saving costs.

ASTHO's Center for Population Health Strategies has been working with states engaged in payment and delivery reforms through on-site visits, working groups, written resources, and TA webinars. As part of this work, ASTHO supported two year-long learning communities for six states who were working on expanding and adopting telehealth initiatives to increase access to and address gaps in care. Building on this successful engagement, ASTHO plans to expand this TA opportunity to other states and territories who are currently leveraging telehealth or looking to expand telehealth programs. More information on ASTHO's work can be found at www.astho.org/telehealth.

Project Description

The goal of this project is to build the capacity of state and territorial health agencies to support telehealth programs in alignment with broader health transformation activities. ASTHO, in partnership with subject matter experts, will facilitate strategic planning related to telehealth, share promising strategies for common challenges, provide tailored TA on implementation barriers, and document lessons learned in order to share with other states and territories looking to enhance telehealth policies and programs. Through this project, ASTHO will provide the following to assist states and territories:

- Customized TA based on individual state or territory requests.
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and materials documenting lessons learned from other teams.
- Best practices, research, and other resources on telehealth, such as promising models for deploying public health interventions through telehealth modalities, strategies for working with professional boards on licensure, and building business case for use with policymakers.
- Connections with experts and other organizations who can provide expertise on telehealth.

Four (4) state and territorial teams will be selected to participate in this telehealth learning community, which would include regular calls to identify needs and tailor TA in preparation for virtual and on-site TA sessions. This

learning community will be held for **24 months** to provide time for sustained collaboration. The first year will be focused on identifying TA needs, working with teams to establish goals and objectives, and providing virtual TA sessions. On-site TA sessions are expected to be held in the following year (up to two site visits per team). State and territorial teams will also have the opportunity to engage with other teams who have common interests through peer-to-peer learning or shared TA sessions.

- **State and territorial teams taking part in this telehealth learning community must include the following members:**
 - Telehealth director or designated staff responsible for managing telehealth activities.
 - Senior Deputy or State/Territorial Health Official.
 - At least 2-3 additional representatives critical to telehealth in the state (local health department staff, consumer advocate, hospital system representative, provider representative, etc.).
- State and territorial teams must **select a point person** for ASTHO correspondence.
- It is critical that the required team members listed above coordinate with each other on future state work around telehealth in regular workgroup meetings or other mechanisms.

Projected Timeline

The projected timeline for the learning community is as follows:

- December 2017: Learning community opportunity released.
- January 16, 2018: Q&A call for interested states and territories held.
- January 31, 2018: Deadline for completed applications.
- February 12, 2018: Applicants notified of selection.
- March 2018: Initial calls with states and territories held to better understand technical assistance needs and complete pre-learning community evaluation.
- April 2018: Kickoff webinar with selected teams for peer-to-peer learning.
- April – August 2018: 1:1 technical assistance calls held with teams, which will also allow for planning for potential site visits (suggested frequency is monthly, but will be based on state preference).
- August 2018 – August 2019: Technical assistance team will support webinars for states and territories on shared technical assistance needs, as well as individual calls as needed. Further, the technical assistance team will complete one initial site visit with each state or territory.
- August 2019 – February 2020: Technical assistance will continue with calls, webinars, and a potential second site visit, depending on funding and technical assistance needs.
- March 2020: Learning community concluded and post-learning community evaluation completed.

Selection Process/Criteria

To indicate your interest in participating in this telehealth learning community, please send a Letter of Interest (LOI) to **Emily Moore, ASTHO's Senior Analyst for Health Transformation, at emoore@astho.org, by **January 31, 2018**. LOI must be signed by your health official indicating their support of your team's participation. ASTHO will host an optional Q&A call about this opportunity on **January 16, from 2-3 ET (Dial: 866.740.1260; Code: 3185493#)**, however questions are welcome at any time.**

LOIs should be concise (approximately 3 pages) and may include attachments. Upon receipt of completed LOIs, the following criteria will be used to select the final states and territories for participation in this telehealth learning community. Please include the following in or attached to your LOI:

- Current policies related to telehealth such as reimbursement policies (i.e., use of different modalities and originating sites) for telehealth activities and licensure for different professions who may utilize telehealth. In addition, please include any pending or recently passed legislation as relevant.
- List of prioritized TA needs and description of how telehealth aligns with strategic priorities for the state or territorial health agency. We encourage being as specific as possible in describing TA needs and goals for this work.
- List of the team members listed above including name, title, and contact information (email/phone).
- Identified telehealth champion (e.g., health official, telehealth network lead, provider, or hospital association representative).
- Please specify your point of contact for ASTHO correspondence.

If more than four states or territories are interested, applicants will be rated on the strength of their core team, inclusion of an identified telehealth champion, known TA needs, and geographic distribution, as appropriate.

We look forward to your response and participation in this important learning community initiative.