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Key Barriers to Rural Healthcare

- Social Determinants of Health
  - Healthcare Access and Quality. **80%** of rural America is medically underserved (NIHCM, 2023)
- Geography
  - Need to travel long distances to access care - take off work, school, rearrange childcare, etc.
  - Inclement weather / travel conditions
- Stigma/ Safety
  - Fear of judgement and lack of a safe space
- Technology Limitations
  - Access to devices
  - Access to connectivity / internet. **17%** of rural americans do not have broadband access (NIHCM, 2023)
- Access to Care
  - Shortage of healthcare providers
  - Lack of specialists

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Telehealth Approach to Reduce Barriers

- Increased access to providers
  - Access care easily, including specialists
  - Addresses workforce shortages
- Timeliness
  - Reduced wait times in the office and for the appointment
- Transportation
  - Less travel required to access adequate care
- Comfort and security
  - Access care where and when it is convenient to you

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A counselor and a librarian sit around a conference table…

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Why Libraries?

- Access to reliable broadband internet connection
- Safe location
- Friendly and knowledgeable staff
- Equipment and resources available
- Designated stops on public transportation
- Community hub to connect community members to telehealth providers

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Public Access Telehealth Spaces (PATHS)

Goals

1. Address healthcare **equity** by creating originating sites for community access to healthcare in stigma-free environments.

2. Enhance an **inclusive** provider network for coordination of care, communication between organizations, and greater awareness of resources for community members.

3. Support partners in guiding implementation of ***telehealth*** in community spaces.

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How Does it Work?

LIBRARY SITES SUPPORT…

- Broadband access
- Secure location
- IT Support
- Online scheduling for use of space
- Data reporting

TELEHEALTH NETWORK SUPPORTS…

- Provider awareness and support for public awareness marketing
- Outcomes evaluation
- Provider education for telehealth
- Grant writing and management

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Collaborators

Library Partners:
- Schedule appointments and maintain spaces
- Assist patrons in use
- Report usage monthly

State Library:
- Connection to libraries
- Help with reporting and data
- Website support

WyTN:
- Community education
- Implementation support
- Management of funds (WIND)

Suicide Prevention Teams:
- Question. Persuade. Refer. training for all library staff
- Community connections

WAMHSAC:
- Connection to community providers
- Public awareness
- Help with tech replacement

Telehealth Providers:
- Provide convenient care to community members
- Inform clients on resources available to them for appointments

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Funding Partners

- American Rescue Plan Act DOH Innovation Fund
- The University of Wyoming College of Education, CLAD
- The University of Wyoming College of Health Sciences, WIND
- The University of Wyoming at Casper
- Wyoming Center on Aging
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, ROTA
- USDA Distance, Learning, & Telemedicine
- Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board
- Wyoming State Library

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What Libraries Need

- Staff Support
  - Additional trainings; HIPAA compliance, Mental Health First Aid, etc.
  - Scheduling system in place for patrons to use access space
  - Marketing - Spreading the word to community members
- Technology
  - Desktop computer, laptop, or tablet
  - Keyboard and mouse
  - High resolution camera
  - Microphone
  - Firewall protection
- Space & Time
  - Physical space for booth or other resources
  - Library staff manage booth
  - Report usage monthly

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Implementation Costs

- Personnel Expenses
  - Graduate Assistant Stipend (2): ~$45,000 each for 2 years
  - Graduate Assistant Tuition (2): ~$19,000 each for 2 years
  - Staff Salary: ~$45,000 for 2 years

→ **Total Personnel:~ $150,000**

- Direct Expenses
  - TalkBox (23): ~ $25,000 each for infrastructure and set up
  - ADA Computer (23): ~$3,800 each
  - ADA Keyboard and Touchpad (23): ~$45 each
  - Direct Marketing (23): ~$1,000 each library
  - Signage, Brochures, and Bookmarks: ~$5,000
  - Creative Design, Logos, Templates: ~$5,000

→ **Total Direct: ~$750,000**

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Implementation and Evaluation

CDC's CORE commitment to health equity (CDC, 2023):

C → Cultivate comprehensive health equity science

O → Optimize interventions

R → Reinforce and expand robust partnerships

E → Enhance capacity and workplace diversity, inclusion, and engagement

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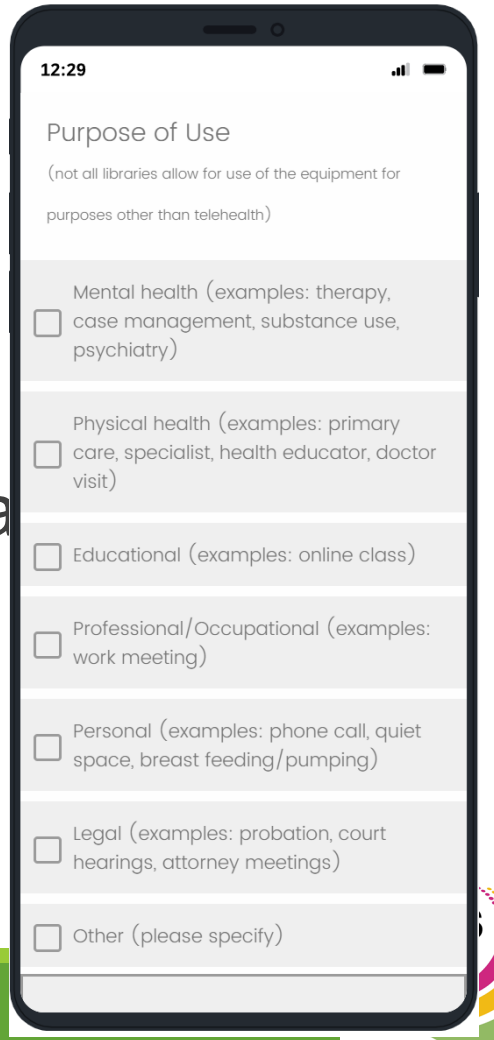
Evaluation, Tracking, & Outcome Data

- Survey for library usage reporting
- Qualtrics is used to track and analyze data
- Evaluates community members needs, resource usa and other general demographics
- Feedback on any issues or ideas for improvement



Current Launched Sites In Wyoming

Funded

1. Cody Library (Park County)
2. Casper Library (Natrona County)
3. Torrington Library (Goshen County)

Park County Library, Cody, WY

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Funded Future Sites In Wyoming

Funded

1. Washakie Library (Washakie County)
2. Tensleep Library (Washakie County)
3. Rawlins Library (Carbon County)
4. Green River (Sweetwater County)

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Network Partners

Wyoming State Library

WyTN Wyoming Telehealth Network

ncht

Wyoming Department of Agriculture

W.A.S.P. Wyoming Alliance for Suicide Prevention

Wyoming ORH Your Partner in Rural Health

University of Wyoming College of Health Sciences Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing

USDA United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development

ICfL Idaho Commission for Libraries

University of Wyoming College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension

University of Wyoming Casper

UW College of Health Sciences Wyoming Institute for Disabilities

University of Wyoming Wyoming Center on Aging

University of Wyoming College of Education

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Collaborate with PATHS

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