

Wyoming Telehealth Network

September Provider Spotlight

1. When did you begin offering telehealth services? What prompted the need to offer these services?

I first started to really think about telehealth in 2016 when I moved to Wyoming. I was working for a school district where I was serving students in buildings about 30-35 mins apart. I was traveling across the district twice a week and sometimes bad weather prevented me from getting to certain buildings. I thought it would be much more efficient and consistent to try telehealth and the district let me try it! It went really well! When I started my practice in 2017, I felt really excited about that possibility for schools all over the state. I have always viewed telehealth as a great way to increase access to care!

2. What motivates you to continue offering telehealth services?

Currently my practice contracts with schools all over WY to provide telehealth speech therapy. We also work with families who live in remote areas of WY & MT, as well as those with unreliable transportation. We reach SO MANY more people because we offer services virtually!

3. What advice would you give patients wanting to try telehealth?

Set yourself up for success. Do a trial run on Zoom (or whatever platform you are using) with a loved one before your appointment- make sure you know how to turn your camera & microphone on, adjust the volume, etc.

4. What advice would you give providers wanting to start offering telehealth?

Think about how you can adapt what you're already doing into a virtual activity, rather than starting over with all activities, tools, etc. Spend time to engage with your patients as a real person (make small talk, share about your day, etc.) to build rapport. It can take a little more effort to make patients feel comfortable when they haven't met you "in real life."

5. What was the biggest barrier in providing telehealth services? Have you overcome it?

Currently, lack of permanent legislation for Medicare telehealth coverage is a major barrier.

6. Is there anything you learned the hard way in telehealth implementation?

Make sure patients have an appropriate device and space to participate in a telehealth appointment! We've had children login for an evaluation on their parent's phone, as an example. It's really important to discuss what the patient will need on their end prior to that first appointment!