# Key Considerations:
Telehealth Readiness-Maine

This brief overview outlines key considerations to implement and maintain effective telehealth programs. A comprehensive assessment of your organization's readiness for telehealth growth, including administrative, clinical, and technological factors, followed by a strategic implementation plan, is critical for long-term success. **Have questions?** Reach out to the federally funded Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC) for free technical assistance and resources - **Contact Us**!

Research & Learn
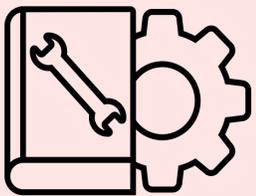
✅ You have a strong base knowledge of telehealth

- Develop your understanding of telehealth: definitions, modalities, specific use cases and outcomes, various equipment and software platforms, and what resources are available.

Here are a few great places to start:

- National Telehealth Resource Centers Resource Page
- Telehealth Resource Library (Northeast Telehealth Resource Center)
- MaineCare Telehealth Member Resources (Maine DHHS- Office of MaineCare Services)
- Telehealth Classroom Resource Portal
- NETRC Telehealth Implementation Tool Kit: Maine Edition

Identify Unmet Healthcare Needs

✅ You understand the needs of your community and how telehealth can help address them

- Determine patient/client and provider needs for certain services. For example, clients may have difficulty obtaining services due to provider shortages, distance and/or transportation challenges.
- Determine the current ability and capacity to provide services.
- Check out the Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment or
- the California Telehealth Resource Center Telehealth Program Developer Kit (page 6) for a needs assessment checklist.

Assess Technology Capabilities

✅ You've confirmed technology capacity and needs for short and long-term telehealth efforts

- Carefully review your current network to determine if there are any issues with bandwidth, security, etc. This will help you assess what improvements need to be made in order to successfully support the type of services you want to provide.
- Identify and procure equipment and/or software necessary to successfully deliver identified services via telehealth.
- Identify technology skills and challenges among your patients! For example, are they comfortable with using the technology? Do they have a device and adequate connectivity?
  - Look here for patient resources in National Digital Equity Center
  - And check out TelehealthForSeniors.org to find resources for older adults.

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Financial & Reimbursement

✅ **You've developed a business plan that includes short and long-term expenses and revenues**

- Consider initial start-up costs, long-term financial sustainability, traditional reimbursement structures, and innovative payment models for telehealth services.
- Check out the Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP) website for federal and state specific reimbursement policies. or contact the NETRC team
- Click here for payer information specific to Maine.
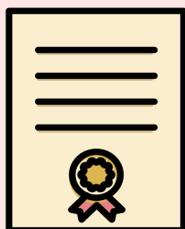
Legal & Regulatory Requirements

✅ **Your team understands federal and state legal and regulatory requirements specific to telehealth**

- Identify any legal, legislative or regulatory constraints that your organization would need to comply with when developing your telehealth program.
  - This includes confirming mandatory licensing and/or credentialing, privacy/security and other requirements for providers to practice. For more information, click here.

Staff Training & Engagement

✅ **Your team is competent in providing services via telehealth**

- Assess provider knowledge, awareness, and skills pertaining to telehealth within your organization.
- Identify high quality training resources and ensure it is implemented among all staff involved in telehealth services.
  - Check out for FREE: Telehealth Classroom Resource Portal (Northeast TRC)
  - There are many additional telehealth training resources available, including free offerings and fee-based programs which offer continuing education credits or certificates.

Implement & Evaluate

✅ **You've launched telehealth and are measuring success**

- If your readiness assessment indicates you are prepared to move forward, it's time to implement your telehealth program. See: Quick Start Guide to Telehealth (Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center); Telehealth Essentials (Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center)
- Evaluate your program - identify SMART* goals that help you measure success (e.g. increased access, decreased no-shows, improved clinical outcomes, etc.) (*Univ. of California)
- If your assessment indicates you're not quite ready, identify the barriers and brainstorm strategies toward a solution. And don't hesitate to tap into regional resources for help!

Dive Deeper

There are many helpful resources available to assist with the day-to-day logistics of telehealth. While not an exhaustive list, the following provide a wealth of practical information and resources around telehealth implementation, including: model programs, workflows, protocols, billing procedures, web-side manner, tech trouble-shooting, patient education, and more.

- **Telehealth.HHS -** U.S. Health and Human Services

- **National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers**

- **Telehealth Resources for COVID-19 Toolkit** Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center

- **AMA Telehealth Playbook -** American Medical Association

Join the NETRC for Maine based virtual Telehealth Office Hours!
First Thursday of Every Other Month 12:00pm-1:00pm
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82689612904

Northeast Telehealth Resource Center
www.netrc.org

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