

The potential benefits of telehealth to rural Nebraska include:

- Increased ability to diagnose patients' illnesses.
- Improved administration and quality of medical services.
- Strengthened ties to specialty care.
- Alleviates the isolation of rural providers.
- Enhanced ability to attract and keep primary care physicians and staff.
- Facilitates training of health professionals in rural communities.
- Enables patients to stay close to home for their care.



Telehealth has demonstrated value

From consulting specialists:

- **Most expressed satisfaction with the amount of medical information received; none expressed dissatisfaction.**
- **When asked if they would use telemedicine again, 97% said “yes” definitely.**
- **Those physicians initially critical of telehealth shifted their assessments positively after using it.**
- **Viewed telehealth as a satisfying experience along all dimensions selected for the study.**



Telehealth has demonstrated value

From referring physicians:

- Felt very strongly that their interpersonal relationship with the consulting physicians improved with telehealth.
- Virtually unanimous (98%) in agreement that telehealth improves their ability to keep patients in their local community.
- Judged telehealth encounters to be satisfactory in terms of the duration, the waiting time before encounter, the personal convenience of the referring provider and perceived convenience of the patient.
- Believe the regular use of telemedicine is improving the quality or keeping the quality of care the same as in-person care.



Telehealth has demonstrated value

From patients:

- Enjoy the convenience of telehealth: both travel and waiting time was less.
- Expressed great appreciation of the ability to get an appointment with a specialist quickly.
- Were satisfied with their personal comfort, respect shown to them by physicians, respect shown by coordinators, and privacy.
- Felt the quality of care was either the same (79% or better (20%) than in-person care.)
- Are satisfied with telehealth: 84% are very satisfied; 10% satisfied.
- Would recommend telehealth to a member of their family.



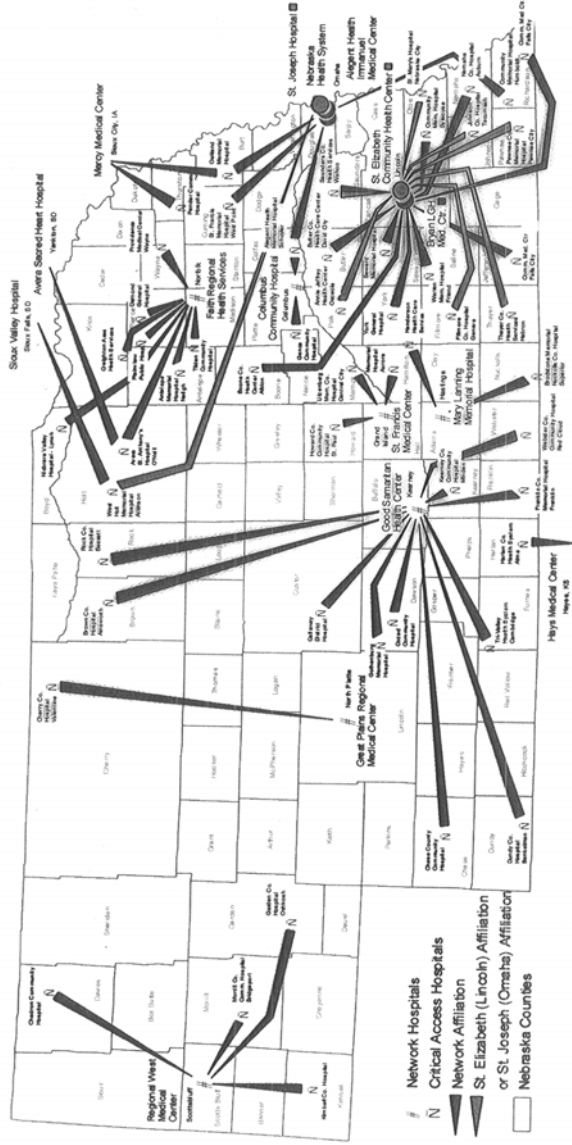
55 Hospitals are Critical Access Hospitals

- CAH networks are a perfect opportunity to link networks of hospitals, physicians and other health care providers through a communications network.
- These CAH networks are the logical base for the establishment of telehealth networks for clinical care, health education and administrative support.
- A key requirement is to identify the communication systems that will be used between the facilities.



Nebraska Critical Access Hospital Networks

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- Network Hospitals
- ▬ Critical Access Hospitals
- ▬ Network Affiliation
- ▬ St. Elizabeth (Lincoln) Affiliation or St. Joseph (Omaha) Affiliation
- Nebraska Counties

A network is defined as one or more CAHs and a larger supporting hospital. There are four types of agreements between the CAH and the supporting hospital concerning patient transfers and referrals, services, contracts, or health professionals, and quality assurance.



Source: Nebraska Health and Human Services System, November 15, 2000.

Notes:

- West Hot Memorial Hospital (Akron), Oakland Memorial Hospital (Oakland), Avera St. Anthony's Hospital (O'Neill), Allegent Health Memorial Hospital (Schuyler), and Saunders Co Health in Yorko each have two network agreements.
- Hayes Co. Health System (Hesra) is affiliated with the Hayes, KS Medical Center, West Hot Memorial Hospital (Akron) is affiliated with St. Joseph's Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD. Oakland Memorial Hospital is affiliated with Mercy Medical Center in Sioux City, IA, Avera St. Anthony's Hospital (O'Neill) is affiliated with Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yorkton, SD.
- CAHs in Albion, Auburn, David City, Fairbury, Falls City, Friend, Seward, Syracuse, and York are affiliated with Bryan LGH Medical Center in Lincoln.
- CAHs in Geneva, Higdon, Hiram, Nebraska City, Fremont, and York are affiliated with St. Elizabeth Community Health Center in Lincoln.
- Yeliko is affiliated with both Bryan and St. Elizabeth.
- CAHs in Schuyler and West Point are affiliated with Allegent Health Inmanuel Medical Center in Omaha. CAHs in Humboldt and Oakland are affiliated with the Nebraska Health System in Omaha. West Hot Memorial Hospital (Akron) is affiliated with St. Joseph Hospital in Omaha.

The Current Missouri Telehealth Network

- **Broadband Connections – T1**
 - H.323 (Internet Protocol)
 - Frame Relay
 - Shared infrastructure with MORENet
 - Each site pays \$250 per month toward telecommunication charges.
- **Any site can call any other site directly!**
- **Federal and State Support for MTN**
 - State support started July 1, 2001