Indian Health Service
Telehealth Overview

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- Important Note: This presentation was developed in collaboration with Indian Health Service (IHS) subject matter expert staff.

- Slides are courtesy of IHS from various IHS websites, webinars and presentations about Telemedicine/Telehealth.

Objectives

1. Provide an overview on the telehealth use at Indian Health Service (IHS) and the services available for Americans Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN).

2. Discuss the telehealth changes Post COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE).

3. Provide updates on telehealth expansion efforts to include: Webex FedRAMP Cloud and AA RingMD JV LLC

4. Review Federal and Tribal telehealth metrics.

5. Identify IHS telehealth accomplishments.

6. Discuss IHS current efforts to support telehealth.

7. Discuss IHS future efforts to support telehealth.

8. Discuss Internet and Broadband resources available

IHS Telehealth Overview/ Background

- Expanded Telehealth to all IHS Staff on April 8, 2020.
- Supported PHE Waivers and Flexibilities
  - Supported use certain additional, non-public facing audio or video communications technologies to augment all clinical activities related to providing care to patients during the COVID-19 national emergency.
- Supported IHS Telehealth Platforms (AA RingMD and Webex)
- Supported Audio-Only Services
- Participated in Telehealth Collaboration
  - Support collaboration of Federal, Tribal and Urban Partners
  - Promote Interagency collaboration
- Sought Provider and Patient Experience

Post COVID-19 PHE

CHANGES AND IMPACT ON TELEHEALTH

Post PHE Services

- Continued access to and reimbursement of telehealth services will vary by payer after the end of the PHE.

- Medicaid telehealth services will continue to vary as many states offered coverage prior to the pandemic, with continued delivery of services not dependent on the end of the COVID-19 PHE. In its fact sheet, CMS "encourages states to continue to cover Medicaid and CHIP services when they are delivered via telehealth" and has provided a **guidance toolkit**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, extended many telehealth flexibilities through December 31, 2024, such as:

- People with Medicare can access telehealth services in any geographic area in the United States, rather than only those in rural areas.

- People with Medicare can stay in their homes for telehealth visits that Medicare pays for rather than traveling to a health care facility.

- Certain telehealth visits can be delivered audio-only (such as a telephone) if someone is unable to use both audio and video, such as a smartphone or computer.

IHS Telehealth Post PHE

- The PHE continues until May 11, 2021

- Supporting Two IHS Telehealth Platforms
  - AA RingMD JV LLC (aka AA RingMD) and
  - Webex FedRAMP Cloud

- Developing Communication about E-Mail Changes
  - Webex will use the RPMS Personal Health Record
  - AA RingMD will send auto-generated email instructing patients to log into the platform and view the message.

- Audio-Only Services Supported

- Providing Resource information

IHS's Current Efforts to Support Telehealth

- Addressing demands for telehealth services

- Providing healthcare via telehealth
  - Enabling patient-to-provider consultation
  - Enabling provider-to-provider telehealth meetings

- Increasing access to specialty care
  - Avel contract renewed for Great Plains Area (GPA) and Bemidji Area

- Working with other agencies to address needs
  - Broadband resources "Internet for All"
  - IHS joined the HHS Long Term Impact of COVID (LTIC) *"Partnerships, Communications and Policy"* workgroup.
  - HHS Releases Long COVID Report Providing Insights and Opportunities to Support Patient Community, HHS.gov (released 11/21/22)

Resource: https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/11/21/hhs-releases-long-covid-report-providing-insights-and-opportunities-support.html

Current Telehealth Expansion Efforts: AA RingMD

- Implemented a Second Telehealth Platform (October 31, 2022)

- Providing Patient and Provider Outreach
  - IT Support (Division of IT Operations Tier III, AA RingMD, Support center, local site, etc.)
  - Presentations (National and internal to IHS)
  - Offering Training

- Addressing Security Requirements (Division of Information Security, AA RingMD)
  - Supporting steps towards FedRAMP Certification

- Addressing Challenges and Barriers
  - Technology and Infrastructure limitations
  - Resources (people and funding)
  - Documentation standardization

- Testing Peripherals

- Analyzing and Addressing Usage
  - Developing Reports
  - Making Enhancement changes

Metrics: IHS Encounters

Encounters Federal Only
NPIRS Data, Workload Clinic +51/D7, A/I/T/M Service Categories
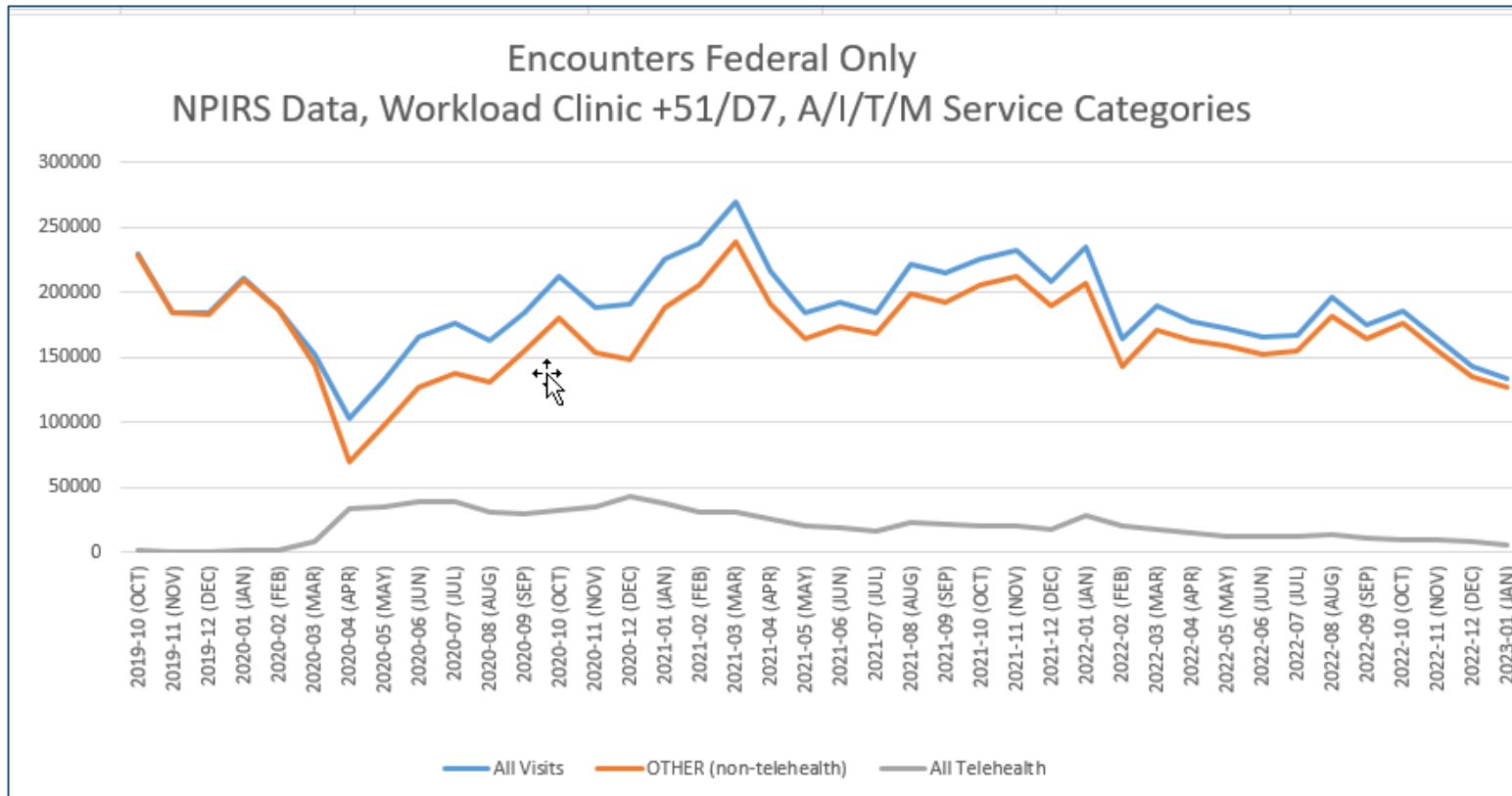
Usage for CY 2022- IHS ONLY
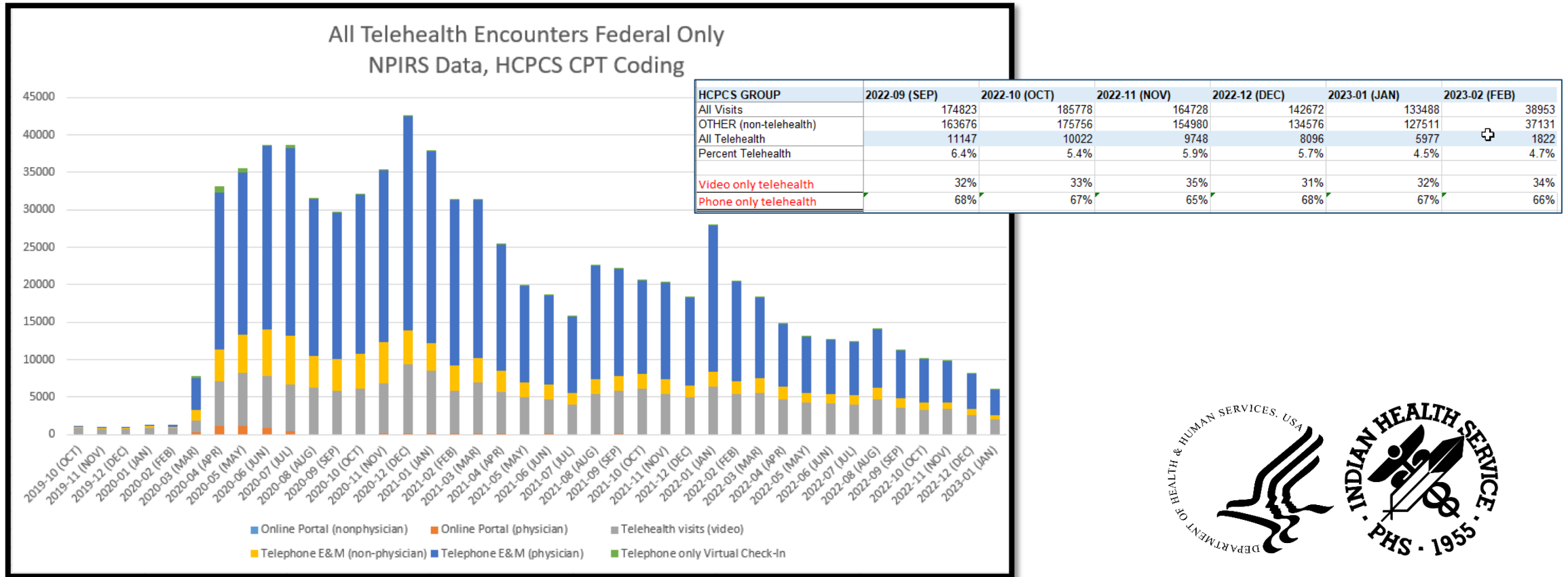
All encounters, the average telehealth use was 8%
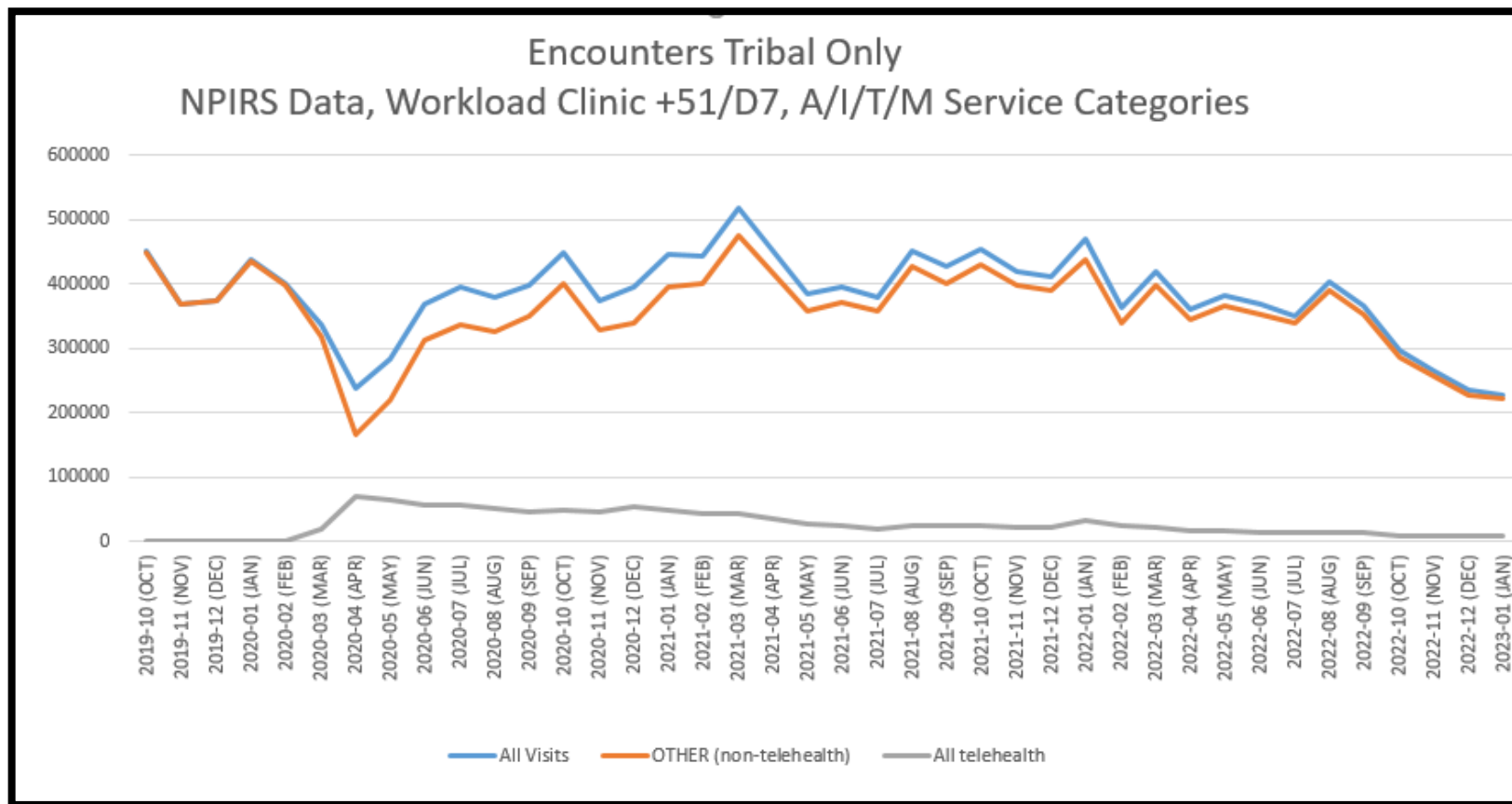From all telehealth encounters:
- Video was 30% and
- Audio Only was 70 %

For January 2023 from All Encounters the use of telehealth was 4.5%

Telehealth Metrics- IHS Only

All Telehealth Encounters Federal Only
NPIRS Data, HCPCS CPT Coding

HCPCS GROUP	2022-09 (SEP)	2022-10 (OCT)	2022-11 (NOV)	2022-12 (DEC)	2023-01 (JAN)	2023-02 (FEB)
All Visits	174823	185778	164728	142672	133488	38953
OTHER (non-telehealth)	163676	175756	154980	134576	127511	37131
All Telehealth	11147	10022	9748	8096	5977	1822
Percent Telehealth	6.4%	5.4%	5.9%	5.7%	4.5%	4.7%
Video only telehealth	32%	33%	35%	31%	32%	34%
Phone only telehealth	68%	67%	65%	68%	67%	66%

Metrics: Tribal Encounters

Encounters Tribal Only

NPIRS Data, Workload Clinic +51/D7, A/I/T/M Service Categories

Legend: All Visits — OTHER (non-telehealth) — All telehealth

Usage for CY 2022- Tribal ONLY

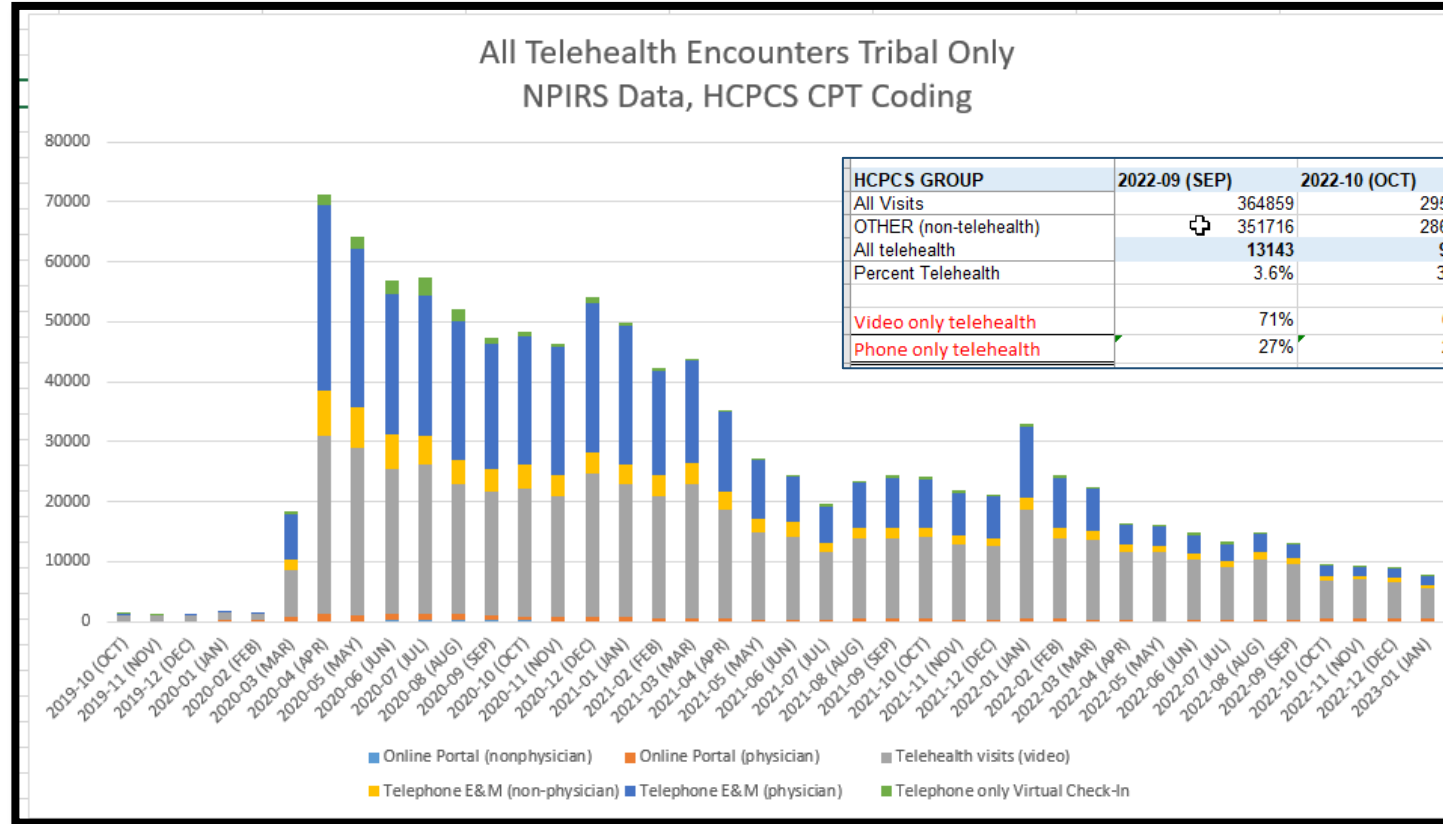All encounters, the average telehealth use was 4.4%
From all telehealth encounters:
- Video was 66% and
- Audio Only was 32%

For January 2023 from All Encounters the use of telehealth was 3.3%

Telehealth Metrics- Tribal Only

All Telehealth Encounters Tribal Only
NPIRS Data, HCPCS CPT Coding

HCPCS GROUP	2022-09 (SEP)	2022-10 (OCT)	2022-11 (NOV)	2022-12 (DEC)	2023-01 (JAN)	2023-02 (FEB)
All Visits	364859	295756	265750	236112	228358	78256
OTHER (non-telehealth)	351716	286208	256560	227340	220839	75976
All telehealth	13143	9548	9190	8772	7519	2280
Percent Telehealth	3.6%	3.2%	3.5%	3.7%	3.3%	2.9%
Video only telehealth	71%	68%	69%	70%	69%	67%
Phone only telehealth	27%	28%	24%	25%	24%	29%

Legend: Online Portal (nonphysician) ■ Online Portal (physician) ■ Telehealth visits (video) ■ Telephone E&M (non-physician) ■ Telephone E&M (physician) ■ Telephone only Virtual Check-In ■

Telehealth Accomplishments: AA RingMD

- Implemented/ rolled out of AA RingMD on 10/31/22. Held lessons learned on 11/29/22.

- IHS Staff training:
  - Completed 40 classes (as of 2/28/23).
  - Trained 326 IHS staff (as of 2/28/23).
  - Providing ad hoc training for groups and individuals.

- Completed reviewing > 35 training materials (videos and handouts), Developed testing plans (with CSI consultants).

- Completed Round 4 pilot training with actual IHS Providers and patients (10/18/22 - 10/24/22).

- FedRAMP Process initiated- Held Kick off meeting with IHS, GSA FedRAMP PMO Team, AA RingMD and Align on 12/1/22.

- Developed and presented leadership briefing on suggestions to support increase access to care using telehealth and presented to IHS Senior Staff on 2/21/23.

- Patient and Provider Telehealth Experience Survey:
  - Received OMB approval for patient survey (1/2023).
  - Received OMB approval for provider survey..

- Security
  - Addressed System Security Plan (SSP) issues (10/28/22 and ongoing).
  - Completed agency specific security plan (10/28/22).
  - Completed agency specific ATO (10/28/22).
  - Finalized Interconnection Security Agreement (ISA) (10/13/22).
  - Interim authority to test approved (10/4/22).
  - Completed all Privacy Impact Assessments and Third Party Website Assessments.

- IT Service Desk
  - Supporting customers (patient and providers)
  - ServiceNow is live with AA
  - Developed and communicated IT support/ workflow (10/24/22).
  - Downtime SOP finalized (3/17/23).

Future IHS Telehealth Efforts

- Survey and Perform Analysis on User Experience
    - Administer Patient and Provider Surveys.
    - Outreach to Areas on how telehealth is progressing.
    - Address changes needed upon analysis of surveys and feedback.

- Continue Addressing Telehealth Documentation Standardization

- Test Peripherals and Perform Market Research

- Obtain FedRAMP Certification for AA RingMD

Internet and Broadband Resources

- FCC National Broadband Map at https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData/consumers

- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is expanding broadband on tribal lands. The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) is a $3 billion grant program directed to Tribal governments to be used for broadband deployment on Tribal lands, as well as for telehealth, distance learning, broadband affordability, and digital inclusion. The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program was established by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 with nearly $1 billion in funding.

- Affordable Connectivity Program
  - Lifeline

- "Internet for all"

Resource information:
https://www.fcc.gov/acp and https://www.internetforall.gov
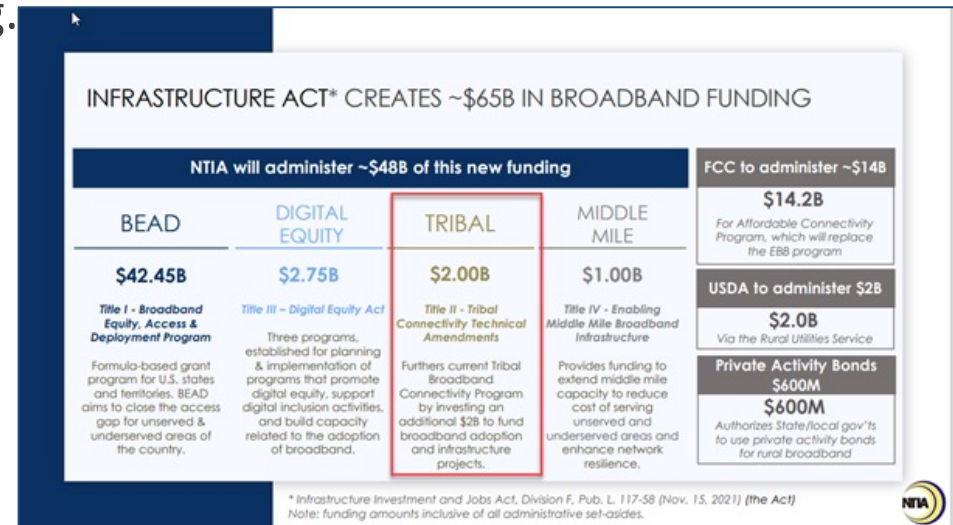
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Questions

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Thank You