



CETF in Partnership with Los Angeles Jewish Home Announces Major FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Award

***Closing the Digital Divide is critical for health equity;
Partnership is only California applicant funded in most recent FCC round***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Los Angeles – The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) in partnership with Los Angeles Jewish Home has been awarded \$862,906 by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) COVID-19 Telehealth Program.

CETF launched collaboration with Los Angeles Jewish Home as the Lead Health Care Provider, along with 12 other California health care entities, including Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF), Tribal Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and Critical Access Hospitals (CAH).

The FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Program supports the efforts of health care providers to continue serving their patients by providing reimbursement for telecommunications services, information services, and connected devices necessary to enable telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 62 health care providers nationwide were awarded funds in the FCC program's second round. CETF, Los Angeles Jewish Home and its collaborative partnership was the only California applicant approved for funding, and was among the highest ranked in this round.

The Los Angeles Jewish Home and the collaborative partners will use the award to purchase telehealth carts, WiFi extenders/mesh networks, and tablets to enable the provision of telehealth services to underserved and under-connected communities across the state in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic illuminated the imperative of the strategy for investments in constructing high-speed Internet infrastructure capable of supporting telehealth services and the urgency for getting all residents online with appropriate computing devices and functional digital literacy.

“Research shows closing the Digital Divide is critical to health equity. People adopt technology when it is relevant to them and one of the most valued uses is for health care. Californians living in skilled nursing facilities and critical care facilities are among the least connected and most in need of telehealth services,” says Sunne Wright McPeak, president and CEO of CETF. She added that the FCC award will help inform strategies to optimize telehealth to close gaps for medically-underserved residents and economically-segregated neighborhoods, which also are home to the most digitally disadvantaged residents.

“We are delighted to receive this significant award as it will jumpstart the work of our unique partnership to help ensure that telehealth is a viable and available health care option for those who can benefit most,” said Dr. Noah Marco, Chief Medical Officer, Los Angeles Jewish Home.

In addition to Los Angeles Jewish Home, CETF is pleased to partner with the following health care providers:

- Carmel Manor, Carmel, California
- Chaparral House, Berkeley, California
- Covenant Living of Turlock – Covenant Village Care Center, Turlock, California
- Inland Christian Home, Ontario, California
- Sierra View Homes, Reedley, California
- The Fountains Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation – Adventist Health, Yuba City, California
- Woods Health Services, Brethren Hillcrest Homes, LaVerne, California
- Sacramento Native American Health Center, Sacramento, California
- Chapa-De Indian Health Program, Inc. – Auburn Health Center, Auburn, California
- Chapa-De Indian Health Program, Inc. – Grass Valley Health Center, Grass Valley, California
- Kern Valley Healthcare District, Lake Isabella, California
- Southern Inyo Healthcare District, Lone Pine, California

CETF and partners are working to address major barriers to advance telehealth in California, which were identified during two CETF Fact-Finding Listening Conferences, including insufficient access to devices, lack of affordability (of both service and devices), lack of consumer information and general under-funding of all aspects of telehealth, among others.

The [CETF Fact-Finding Listening Conference Final Report and Action Plan](#) identified 3 key action steps, including enacting legislation to permanently reimburse Telehealth services comparable to in-person visits, investing in and ensuring ubiquitous high-speed Internet infrastructure to support Telehealth for all patients and providers, and institutionalizing Telehealth with accountability for improving patient outcomes and overall population health.

About California Emerging Technology Fund

CETF is a statewide non-profit foundation with the mission to close the Digital Divide in California. CETF provides grants to non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) to assist low-income households adopt broadband and become digitally proficient, leads and manages School2Home to successfully integrate technology into teaching and learning with deep parent engagement to close the Achievement Gap in middle schools in low-income neighborhoods, and promotes Digital Inclusion in public policy to achieve Digital Equity.