



# Utilizing Telehealth to Achieve Health Equity in Minority Communities

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Louisiana's Health Initiative

# Speaker(s)

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  - Black Women's Health Imperative
- **Zsanai Epps, MPH, CHES**
  - Director of My Sister's Keeper & Positive Period
  - Black Women's Health Imperative





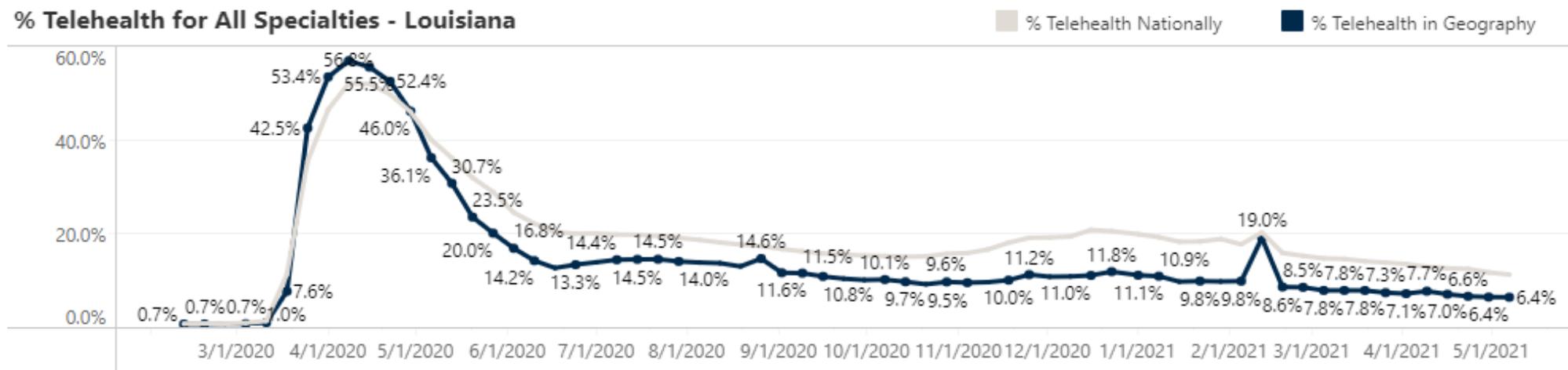
# Objectives

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- Explore the benefits of virtual care and how it positively impacts minority populations
- Learn from a real story of going virtual—Black Women’s Health Imperative will share about their experience with a recent virtual National Diabetes Prevention Program
- Discover how Well-Ahead Louisiana can support providers in implementing telehealth solutions as a standard of practice in their facility

# Telehealth in Louisiana

- Telehealth utilization peaked in March and April of 2020 due to the COVID-19 PHE
- Utilization began to decrease in May of 2020 and has plateaued
  - 11% nationally, and around 6% in Louisiana.



# Benefits of Telehealth



- Limited physical contact reduces exposure for patients
- Patients can receive health care wherever they are located
- Improves patient satisfaction and health outcomes
- Can shorten patient's wait for an appointment
- Patients have increased access to specialists
- Provides medical access for people in rural and underserved urban areas
- Improved quality metrics for organizations
- Improves clinical workflows and increases practice efficiency
- Burnout prevention for providers
- Reduces overall health care costs and practice overhead
- Expands access to care and reaches more patients
- Helpful to monitor and improve ongoing health issues, such as medication changes or chronic health conditions

# Health Disparities



- Health disparities are health differences between different groups of people. It is not simply differences in health outcomes, but it represents significant gaps in what tools and resources can be accessed by whom and when
  - Across 27 specific health measures, African American health outcomes are worse than those for Caucasians.
  - Health outcomes also are worse for Hispanics and Native Americans across most measures
  - Those with low incomes or low socioeconomic status have worse outcomes than those with higher socioeconomic status.
  - The rural population is less healthy than the urban and suburban populations



# Telehealth and Health Equity in Minority Communities

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- While there are many barriers to health equity, we find that physical access to care is one of the biggest obstacles that could be alleviated with the increased use of telehealth.
- Placing emphasis on equity across minority communities, requires us to acknowledge how telehealth can lead to more accessible care, better health outcomes, and potentially provide a better experience.
- Technology and digital literacy must be better diffused across various socioeconomic and demographic groups.
- We must leverage telehealth as a means to increase access to care and realize it is not just a PHE solution, but it is a critical tool in healthcare delivery.

# Telehealth and Health Equity in Minority Communities

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- Collectively, we must address how we can improve access to care through telehealth by advocating for:
  - Digital literacy and engagement
  - Technology and innovation
  - Equitable infrastructure



# An Era of Collaboration



**How Well-Ahead and BWHI are Expanding Reach and Access  
to the National Diabetes Prevention Program in Louisiana**



**BLACK WOMEN'S**  
HEALTH IMPERATIVE



**Paula Green-Smith, MA**  
**Chief Training Officer**



**Zsanai Epps, MPH, CHES**  
**Director of My Sister's Keeper &**  
**Positive Period**

# Learning Objectives:

**Explore Benefits of  
Virtual  
Healthcare/Telehealth**

**Review lessons  
learned in using a  
virtual platform to  
deliver the  
National DPP**

**Highlight  
Successes of the  
Collaboration**

# Virtual Healthcare/Telehealth:

## Virtual Care

Virtual visits between healthcare experts and patients via communications technology

## Benefits

- No transportation time or costs
- Less child or elder care needs
- Less exposure and risk for illness

## Telehealth

Broad term encompassing virtual healthcare services and more



**DP18-1815**

**(Strategy A.6) Increasing Participant Enrollment in CDC-Recognized Lifestyle Change Programs**



**DP18-1815**

**Improving the Health of Americans Through Prevention and Management of Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Stroke**

**Expanding Reach and Access to the National DPP in Louisiana**



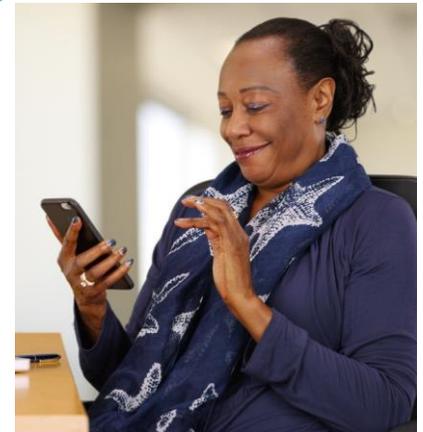
**BLACK WOMEN'S**  
HEALTH IMPERATIVE



**APP**

**CYL<sup>2</sup> CHANGE YOUR LIFESTYLE.  
CHANGE YOUR LIFE.**

**#CYL2PreventsType2** POWERED BY   
**BLACK WOMEN'S  
HEALTH IMPERATIVE**



**Culturally Modified  
Curriculum**

**Virtual Platform Delivery of the  
National Diabetes Prevention Program**

# Benefits Reaped:

## Supportive Resources

- Funding
- MarComms
- Operational

## Training & TA

- Coach
- ACT
- Data Tracking & Reporting

## Expanded Reach

- National DPP Access
- Remote Delivery
- Participant Engagement

# Lessons Learned:

## Structural

- App Licensing
- Organization Policies & Procedures
- Staffing

## Support

- Additional Funding
- Creative MarComms
- Targeted Training & TA

## Reach/Access

- Regional Connectivity
- Organization Tech Needs
- Participant Tech Needs

***Flexibility, Ingenuity, Perseverance!***



**BLACK WOMEN'S**  
HEALTH IMPERATIVE

[www.bwhi.org](http://www.bwhi.org)



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**Thank  
You!**



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# Well-Ahead Louisiana Telehealth Programs

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- **Telehealth Policy Guidance and Updates**
  - Monitor the status of federal and state legislation related to telehealth; providing information, data, and best practice guidance to state lawmakers and healthcare professionals.
- **Telehealth Education Series**
  - We offer education series and toolkits that help patients and providers navigate the use of telehealth.
- **TexLa Telehealth Resource Center**
  - Well-Ahead Louisiana is partnered with TexLa Telehealth Resource Center to serve as the Louisiana Site Coordinator, providing telehealth technical assistance and education to providers across Louisiana.



# Well-Ahead Louisiana Telehealth Programs

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- **Virtual National Diabetes Prevention Program**
  - A partnership of public and private organizations working to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.
  - Organizations that implement a National DPP make it easier for people at risk for type 2 diabetes to participate in evidence-based lifestyle change programs to reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- **DSMES via Telehealth**
  - An evidence-based intervention that provides people with diabetes with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to better manage and navigate daily life with a chronic condition

**QUESTIONS?**



# Contact Information

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# Provider Education Network

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- The Provider Education Network helps healthcare professionals address the challenges facing our communities
  - Education
  - Technical Assistance
  - Quality Improvement Strategies
  - Workforce Development
  - Patient Education Tools
  - Links to Community-Based Programs
- Join today at [www.wellaheadla.com/join-provider-education-network](http://www.wellaheadla.com/join-provider-education-network)



Thank You for Joining Us!

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