

Nemours Children's Health Awarded FCC Funding to Extend Access to Healthcare Through Telehealth



Jacksonville, Fla. (Nov. 29, 2021) – To further support the innovative delivery of healthcare, Nemours Children's Health has been awarded funding of \$904,048 by The Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The pediatric health system will use these funds to purchase equipment at Nemours Children's Hospital, Florida to ensure patients have access to care during the

COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Nemours will replace aging equipment or purchase new equipment for use in rural locations and other areas impacted by the pandemic. Telehealth allows Nemours providers to provide virtual care to patients who cannot or prefer not to access in-person care and who may be at higher risk for poor health.

"A growing number of our patients, especially in remote areas of Florida, have come to rely on telehealth services," said Robert Bridges, Executive Vice President & Chief Executive of Florida Operations for Nemours Children's Health. "It has become a critical tool for families who need to see our specialists when a trip to the clinic just doesn't work, and also allows our care providers optimal use of their valuable time."

Nemours Children's Health began using telehealth in 2014, and experienced a dramatic increase in its use during the COVID-19 pandemic, when families sought health care from the comfort and safety of their own homes. The [Nemours app](#), which links patients to online pediatricians on-demand, saw average daily use skyrocketing from 1,150 visits in February 2020 to more than 28,000 for the month in April 2020. Currently, for 2021, Nemours Children's is seeing an average of about 10,000 visits per month.

Due to stay-at-home orders impacting timely care, Congress created and funded the FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Program in the CARES Act of 2020. Recognizing the need for additional funds, Congress allocated additional funds to the program in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

"Telehealth can close gaps in healthcare access, provision, quality and outcomes," said Carey Officer, Vice President for the Nemours Center for Health Delivery Innovation. "It is a necessary tool to reduce barriers to safe and reliable healthcare, especially for underserved populations and families with children."

Nemours recently conducted a [survey](#) with national telehealth leader Amwell® (NYSE: AMWL) on use of the innovative tool. The survey found that a substantial majority of parents (61%) are more willing to use telehealth than before the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey was administered to better understand the COVID-19 impact on telehealth one year after the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic. Beyond trends related to higher telehealth volume and acceptance, this national report shows adverse social determinants of health are widely present; telehealth offers a positive influence on balancing parental responsibilities; providers can act as enablers to telehealth; and reimbursement remains a barrier to more widespread use of telehealth.

Also, according to the survey, almost 90 percent of parents indicate telehealth would allow them to be more involved in their child's healthcare when compared to in-person care, a strong indicator that telehealth and remote monitoring services integrated into a family's daily activities might promote more attention to health and wellness.

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About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, including two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of nearly 75 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, [Nemours KidsHealth.org](#).

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves.

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