



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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**Hawai'i Department of Health accelerating telehealth adoption  
among community health centers statewide  
to provide care to vulnerable populations during current pandemic**

HONOLULU — When COVID-19 and social distancing guidance required healthcare providers to rethink the way they delivered care, larger healthcare organizations were able to rapidly pivot to telehealth and keep pace with the rest of the nation.

But Hawai'i's community health centers—federally qualified health centers—needed assistance in getting up to speed to serve the state's most vulnerable populations. Patients who receive care at these centers pay for their care on a sliding scale discount, depending upon their household incomes.

With a combined total of \$670,000 from the Hawai'i State Legislature and federal telehealth grant awards, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with the University of Hawai'i Area Health Education Center and Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center, has provided the necessary policy guidance and technical support for community health centers to take advantage of new federal telehealth reimbursement policies. This has included weekly webinars on the basics of telehealth for providers.

"It has been an intensely busy time and it has been amazing to see our community partners and healthcare providers come together at such a critical time to help Hawai'i's families access healthcare services from home," said Laura Arcibal, DOH telehealth and health care access coordinator.

To date, telehealth funding has been provided to:

- Hamakua Health Center (Hawai'i Island)

- Ka‘u Rural Health Community Association, Inc. (a community-based nonprofit organization in Pahala on Hawai‘i Island)
- Lāna‘i Community Health Center (Lāna‘i)
- Ho‘ola Lāhui Hawai‘i (Kaua‘i)
- Wahiawā Health Center (O‘ahu)
- Wai‘anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (O‘ahu)
- Kōkua Kalihi Valley (O‘ahu)
- University of Hawai‘i, John A. Burns School of Medicine – Area Health Education Center

In addition to primary care, patients have been able to access behavioral health care services and COVID-19 screening via telehealth at <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/telehealth/>

“Community healthcare providers who serve the most vulnerable populations in Hawai‘i hope telehealth can become part of the new normal to continue to efficiently deliver quality care and that the federal reimbursement policies will remain in place permanently beyond the current COVID response,” Arcibal said.

To learn more about telehealth in Hawai‘i, visit: <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/telehealth/>.

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