

Telehealth Equity 2

Second in a series of virtual forums: July 19, 2021



Partnership for a Connected Illinois
broadbandillinois.org

The Illinois Telehealth Initiative (ITI) is a project of the nonprofit Partnership for a Connected Illinois (PCI). Over the last five years, ITI organized Law and Policy Forums examining the telehealth landscape in Illinois and the broader Midwest. The Forums feature interactive panel discussions on the current legal and regulatory environment for telehealth, reimbursement trends and opportunities, and telemedicine delivery and business models. <http://www.broadbandillinois.org/index.html>

Telehealth is being introduced to a healthcare system that suffers from inequities. Disparities in healthcare for underserved and rural communities were well documented prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 significantly exacerbated many of these underlying inequities and shone a much-needed light on barriers to equitable healthcare. Proactive steps must be taken to assure telehealth equity and that telehealth can become a great equalizer. This Telehealth series will include the following three Forums:

1. Current inequities and projects that use telehealth to minimize these inequities,
2. Effective projects to provide telehealth to both urban, rural and suburban children
3. Broadband expansion to enable telehealth to underserved communities.

Forum 2—How Broadband Can Promote Telehealth Equity

Telehealth has proven to be a vital lifeline during the pandemic, highlighting its ability to significantly expand access to valuable services. It is critical to take specific actions to eliminate barriers associated with the equitable deployment and utilization of telehealth services. Affordable connection to the Internet is a link for vulnerable communities to access through telehealth care they need.

Speakers:

John Windhausen Jr., Executive Director, Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition, will present the **National Perspective**. John founded the SHLB Coalition in 2009 with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He was the principal staff person responsible for drafting the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and served as chief legal adviser on telecom issues to Senators Fritz Hollings and Daniel Inouye.



Matt Schmit, Director of Illinois Office of Broadband, will speak on the **Illinois Perspective**. Matt oversaw the \$420 million broadband expansion effort and is responsible for discussions between municipalities, providers, local and outside the region, to provide a better digital infrastructure that supports telehealth services. Matt is a former state senator in his native Minnesota where he helped lead successful broadband expansion efforts.

Ronda Sauget, Executive Director and CEO of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois, will address the **Community Perspective**. Ronda is responsible for identifying and mobilizing effective partnerships to address regional economic development issues. The Leadership Council led significant telehealth efforts in the region that were made possible because of broadband expansion.



Date:

Monday, July 19, 2021 • 2:30–3:30 pm CT

Online

Host:  **Seyfarth**

[Register for Forum 2 Here](#)