

Arizona Telemedicine Council Meeting

Office of Connected Care Telehealth Program

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Education Specialist

2022

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Connected Care

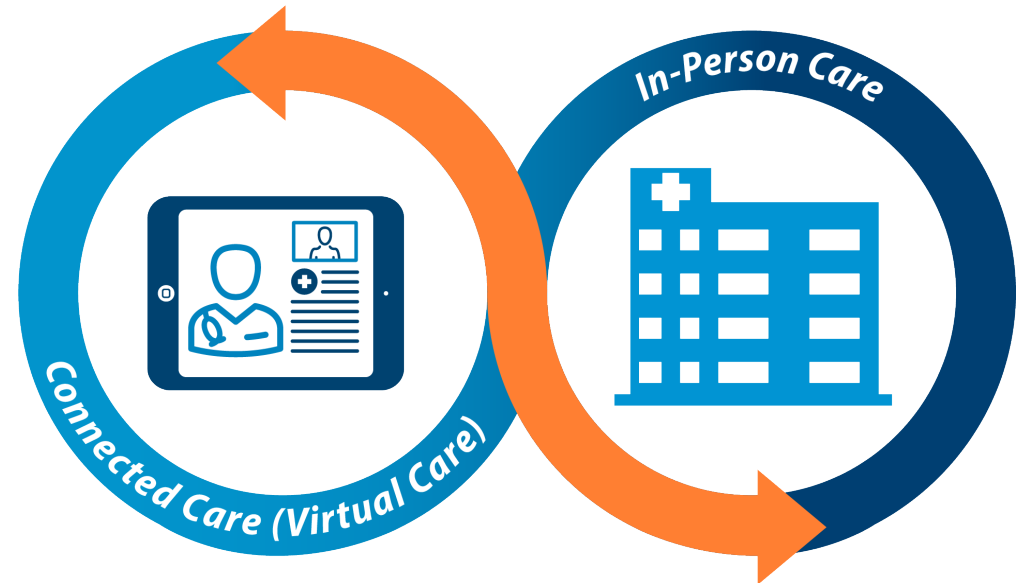
VA Telehealth Approach



Our Vision

Trusted Care: Anytime, Anywhere

- VA will use connected technologies to enhance the **accessibility, capacity, quality,** and **experience** of VA care for Veterans, their families, and their caregivers anywhere in the country.
- Connected Care will be integrated into the daily lives of both VA staff members and the Veterans they serve.



Our Impact

"The VA telehealth program really saved my life when I had COVID-19, because every single day, I had someone who was checking on me at home. My telehealth nurse checked on my symptoms and encouraged me through my feelings of helplessness and depressive episodes."

"Telehealth has been invaluable ... It's like my doctor is right in the room. This has made it easier for us. A life-changing event."

"With TeleMental Health, I'm able to receive the help I need in a comfortable setting, without the stress of traffic and hospital waiting rooms. My doctor brings me back into focus and helps me deal with a very dark time."

"VA Video Connect really is a timesaver for Veterans. With VA Video Connect, I can receive my care, no matter where my specialist is."

"Home Telehealth was the best move I ever made. For me, my blood pressure is very important, and using telehealth, they are able to monitor that from home."

"Telehealth did more than save me a trip to the VA Medical Center. It detected my stage 1 skin cancer and allowed me to get treated."

VA Telehealth Modalities



Synchronous Telehealth

- In the Home
- In the ER
- In the Clinic
- In the ICU



Asynchronous Telehealth

- Dermatology
- Retinal Imaging (TRI)
- Spirometry
- Sleep Medicine



Remote Patient Monitoring

Home Telehealth

- Care and Case Management
- Education
- Independence

VA Care to the Home



VA Video Connect

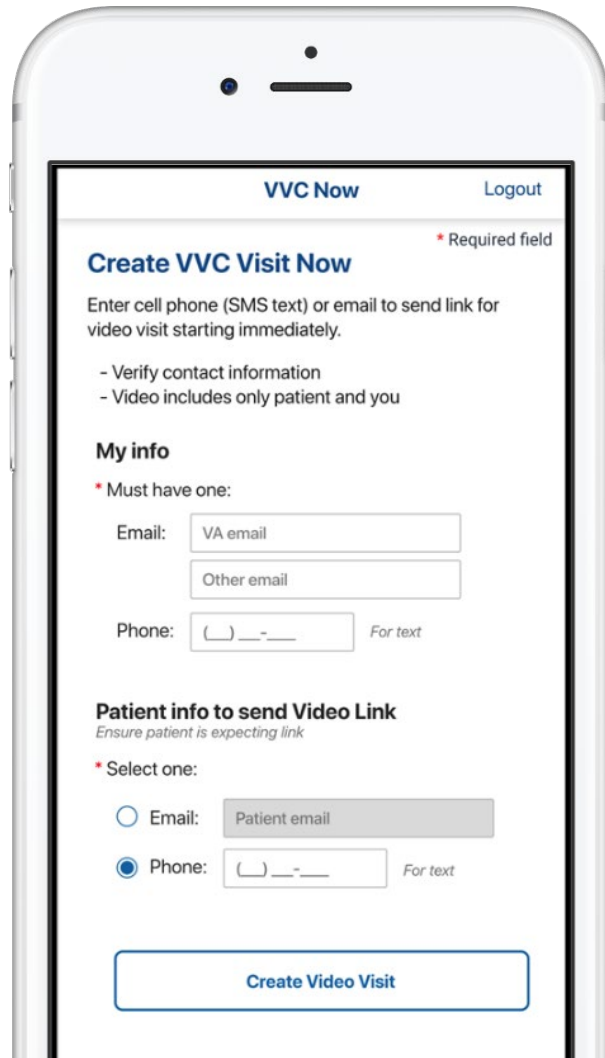
- Videoconferencing tool
- Web-based
- Secure and simple
- Connects provider and Veteran
- Any device (Veteran's personal or VA loaned)
- Any location

Remote Exams and Contactless Monitoring

- Peripheral devices
 - Personalized home kit
 - Integrated with VVC



Innovation in Video Visits



The image shows a smartphone screen with the 'VVC Now' app interface. At the top, there is a 'Logout' link. The main heading is 'Create VVC Visit Now' with a red asterisk indicating a required field. Below this, there is a sub-heading 'Enter cell phone (SMS text) or email to send link for video visit starting immediately.' followed by two bullet points: '- Verify contact information' and '- Video includes only patient and you'. Under the heading 'My info', there is a note '* Must have one:' followed by three input fields: 'Email: VA email', 'Other email', and 'Phone: () _ - _ For text'. Below this, under the heading 'Patient info to send Video Link', there is a note 'Ensure patient is expecting link' and a note '* Select one:' followed by two radio button options: 'Email: Patient email' and 'Phone: () _ - _ For text'. At the bottom of the form is a blue button labeled 'Create Video Visit'.

VVC Now

- Send VVC links for ad hoc visits using email or phone number.
- VVC links can now be sent by **text message**.
- Immediate and will not appear as a scheduled video visit.



Not Every Appointment Needs to be Live – My VA Images

- My VA Images is a web application that allows patients to submit videos or images to their provider for review.



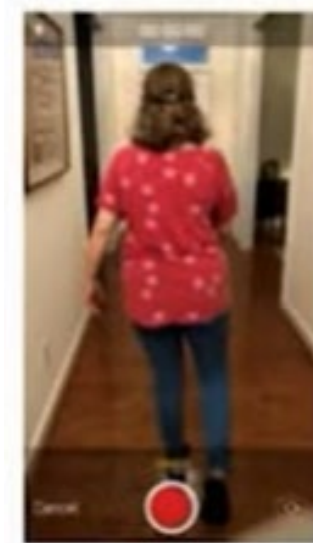
743 unique users in 2021 – four times the amount in 2020

1,062 unique users FY22.



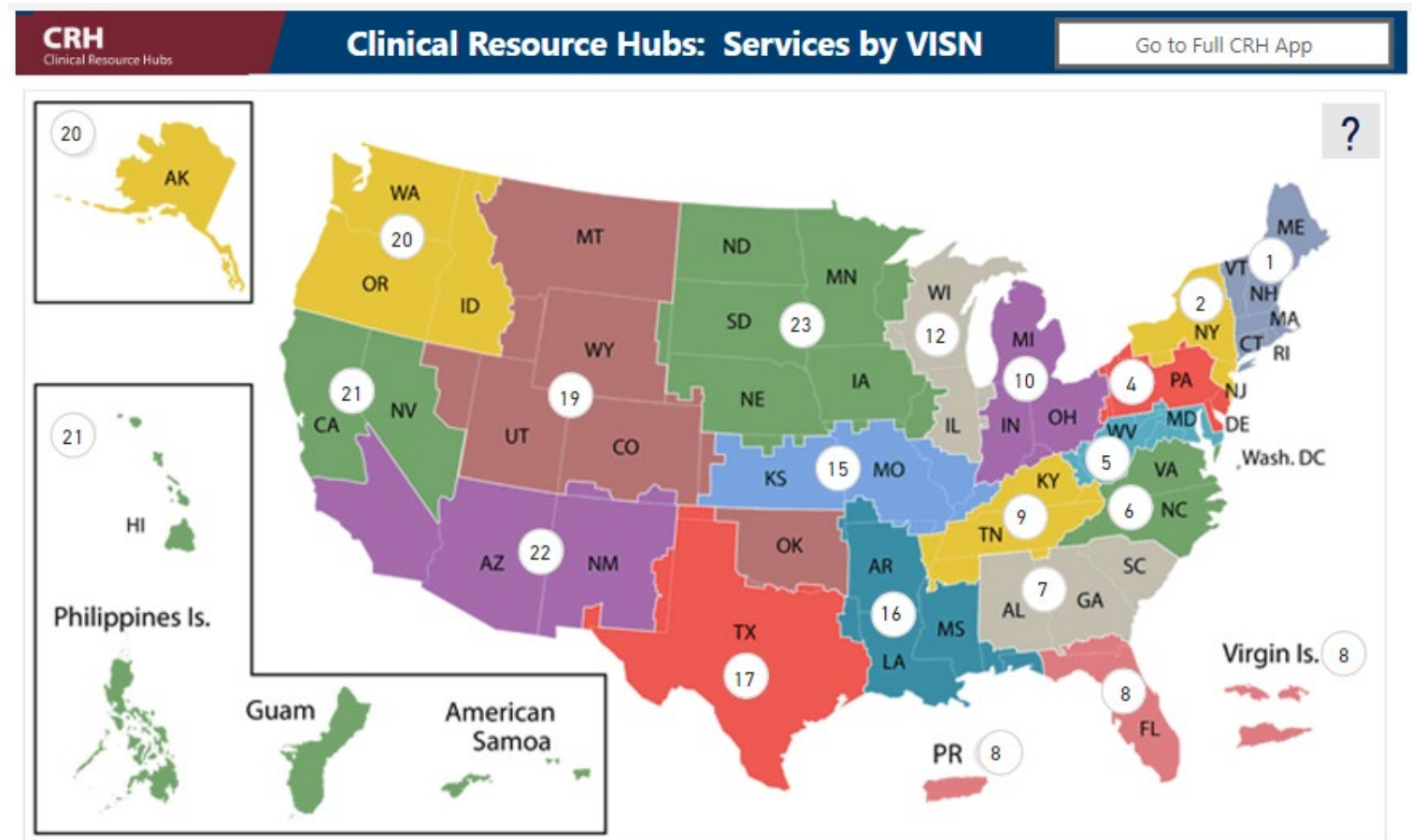
My VA Images

- Allow patients to access health care remotely from home, saving them travel and time
- Enable patients to provide high quality images, submitted securely and at their convenience
- Enhanced flexibility in providing patient care
- Free up clinic space for patients who must be seen in person



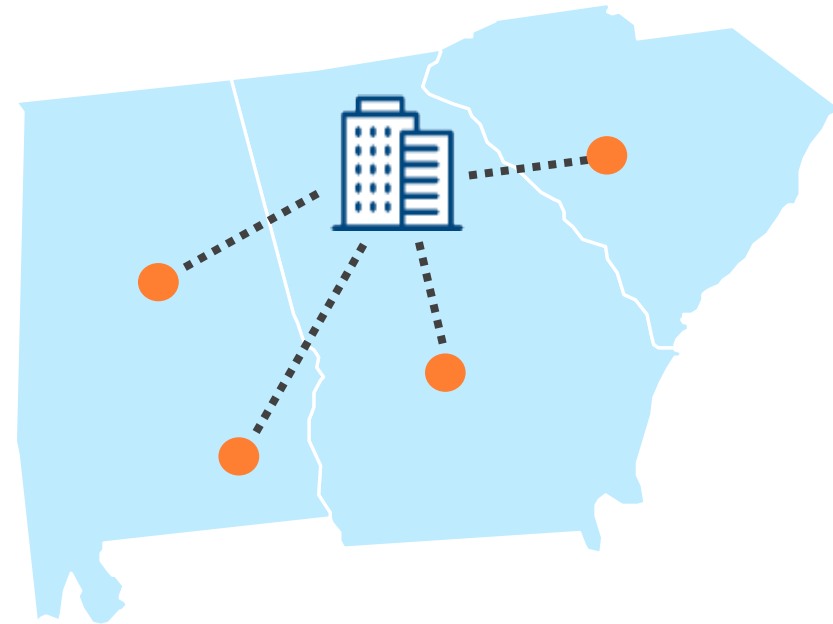
VISNs & CRHs

- Veterans Integrated Service Networks (or regions)
- Clinical Resource Hubs



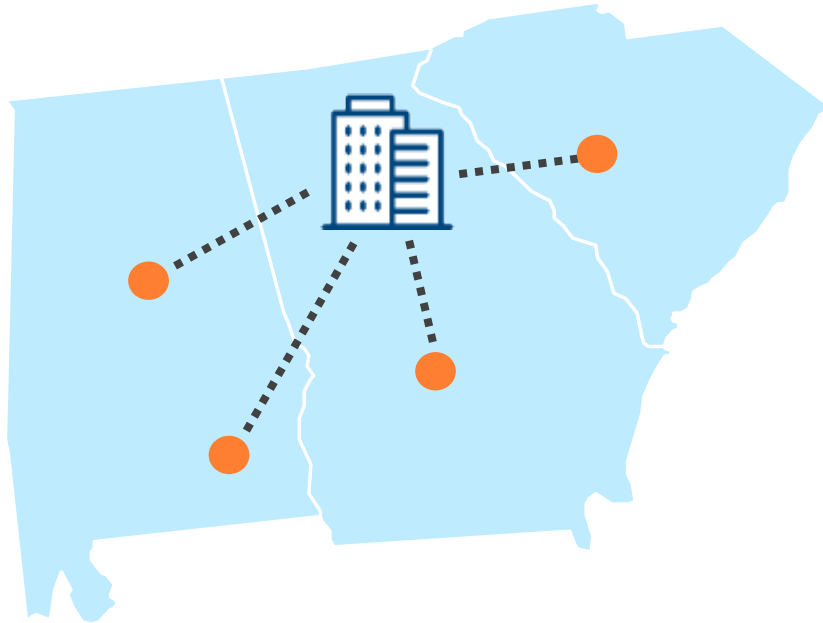
Clinical Resource Sharing

- Clinical Resource Hubs manage clinical resource sharing to match supply/demand across urban and rural areas.
 - Primary Care, Mental Health, Specialty Care, Physical Medicine and Rehab, Surgical Care
 - Regional, Consortia
- National Telehealth Hubs
 - TeleCritical Care
 - TeleStroke
 - TeleNeurology
 - TeleOncology
 - TeleGenomics
 - TeleSleep
 - TeleEye
 - TeleDermatology
 - TeleRadiology

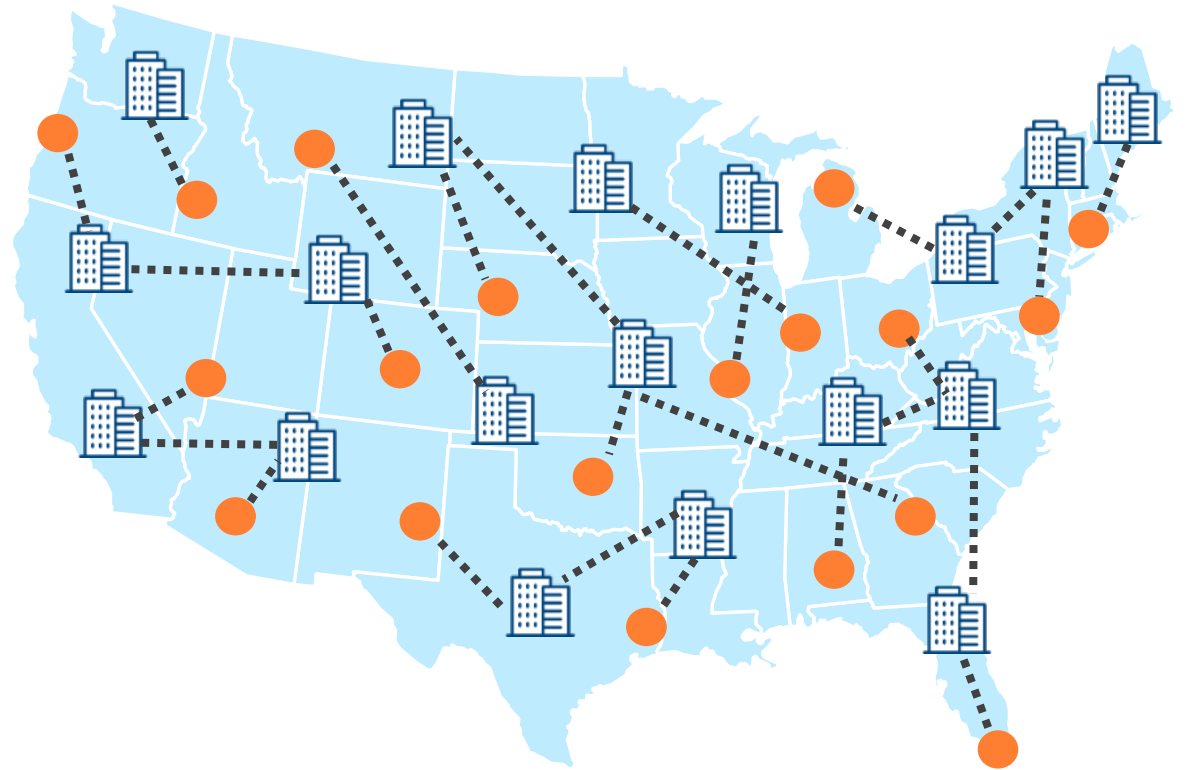


The Virtual Healthcare System

Where We Were



Where We're Going



Patient-Generated Health Data (PGHD)

- **Health-related data that is gathered outside of a clinical setting.**
- Veterans can log information such as diet, mood, sleep, and weight to gather data such as blood pressure, glucose levels, and heart rate.
 - Wearable devices and sensors (FitBit, Apple Watch, glucometers)
 - Pen and paper
 - Apps (Sync My Health Data)
 - My HealtheVet

Available to VA staff through the **Virtual Care Manager** app



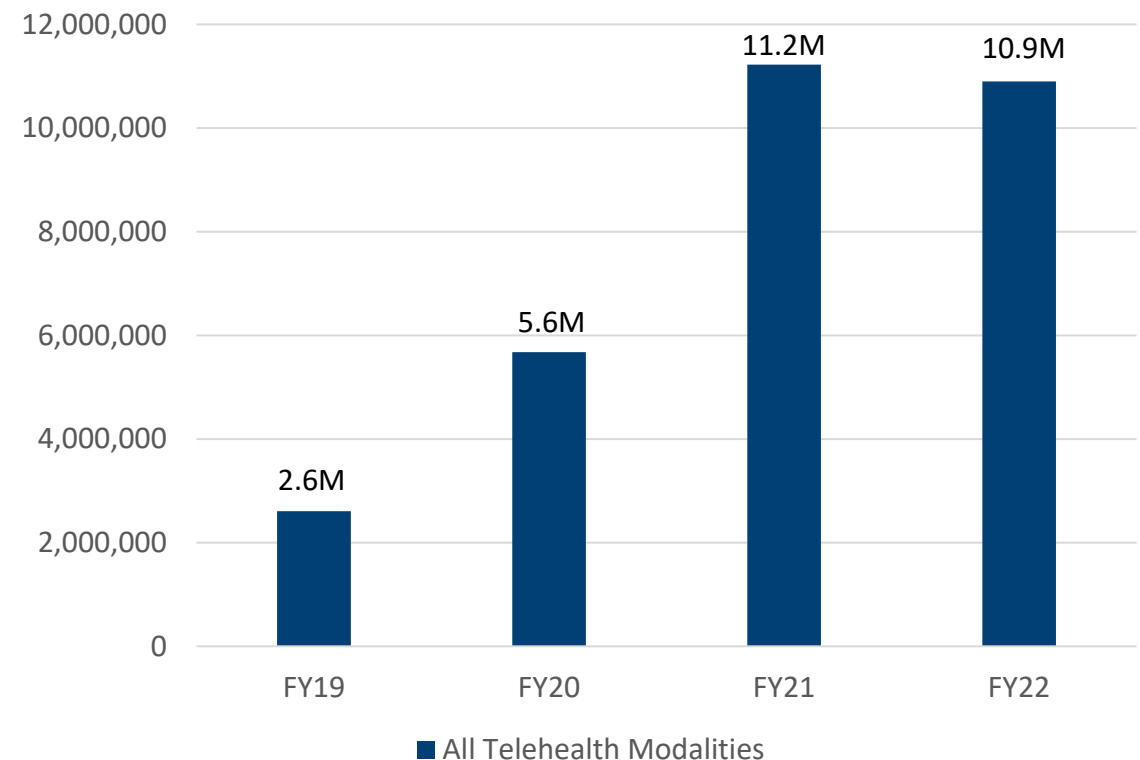
Telehealth Data



Telehealth in 2022

- In FY22, over **2.3 million** Veterans received over **10.9 million** episodes of care across all modalities.
- Since the outset of the pandemic in March 2020, VA has completed over **20 million** telehealth visits (March 1, 2020 – July 25, 2022).
- In the past two fiscal years, approximately **30%** of Veterans who received VA care received some portion of their care via telehealth in their home.

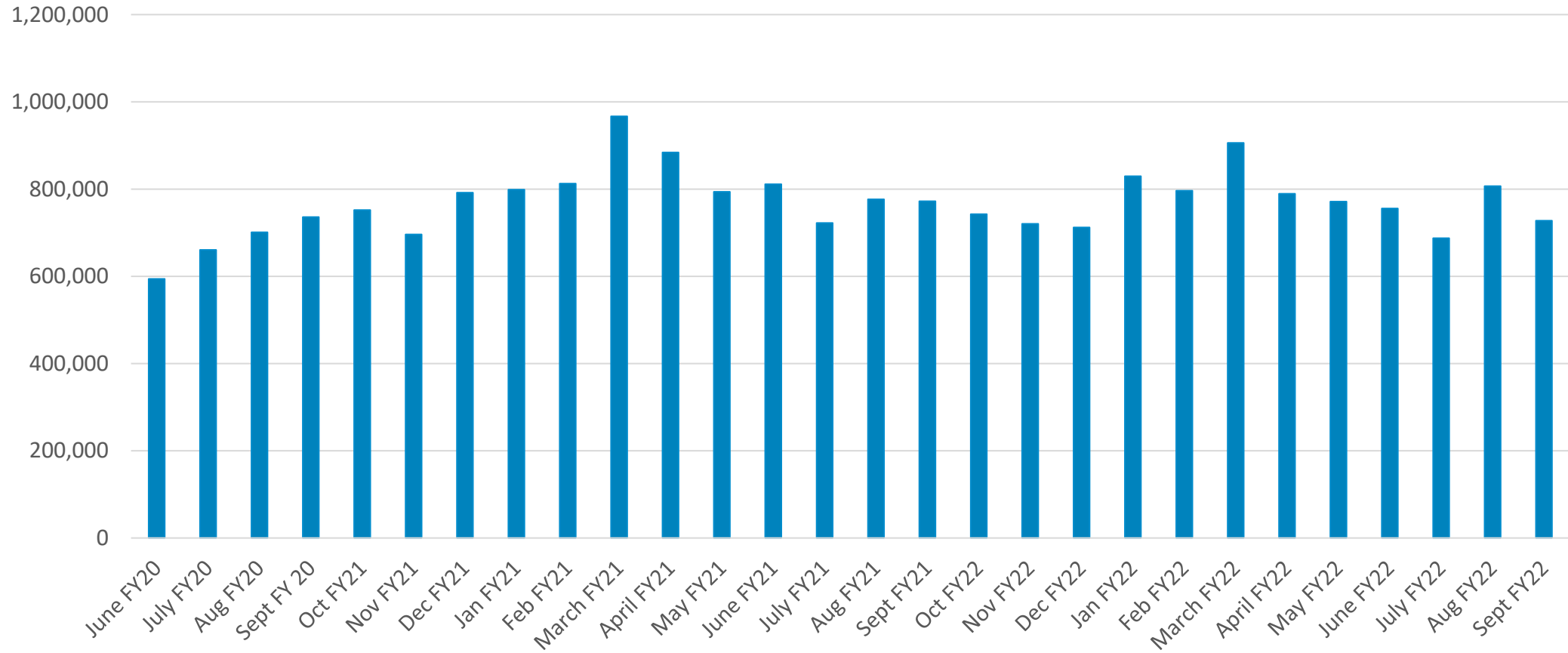
Telehealth Episodes of Care



"VA Video Connect really is a timesaver for Veterans. With VA Video Connect, I can receive my care, no matter where my specialist is."

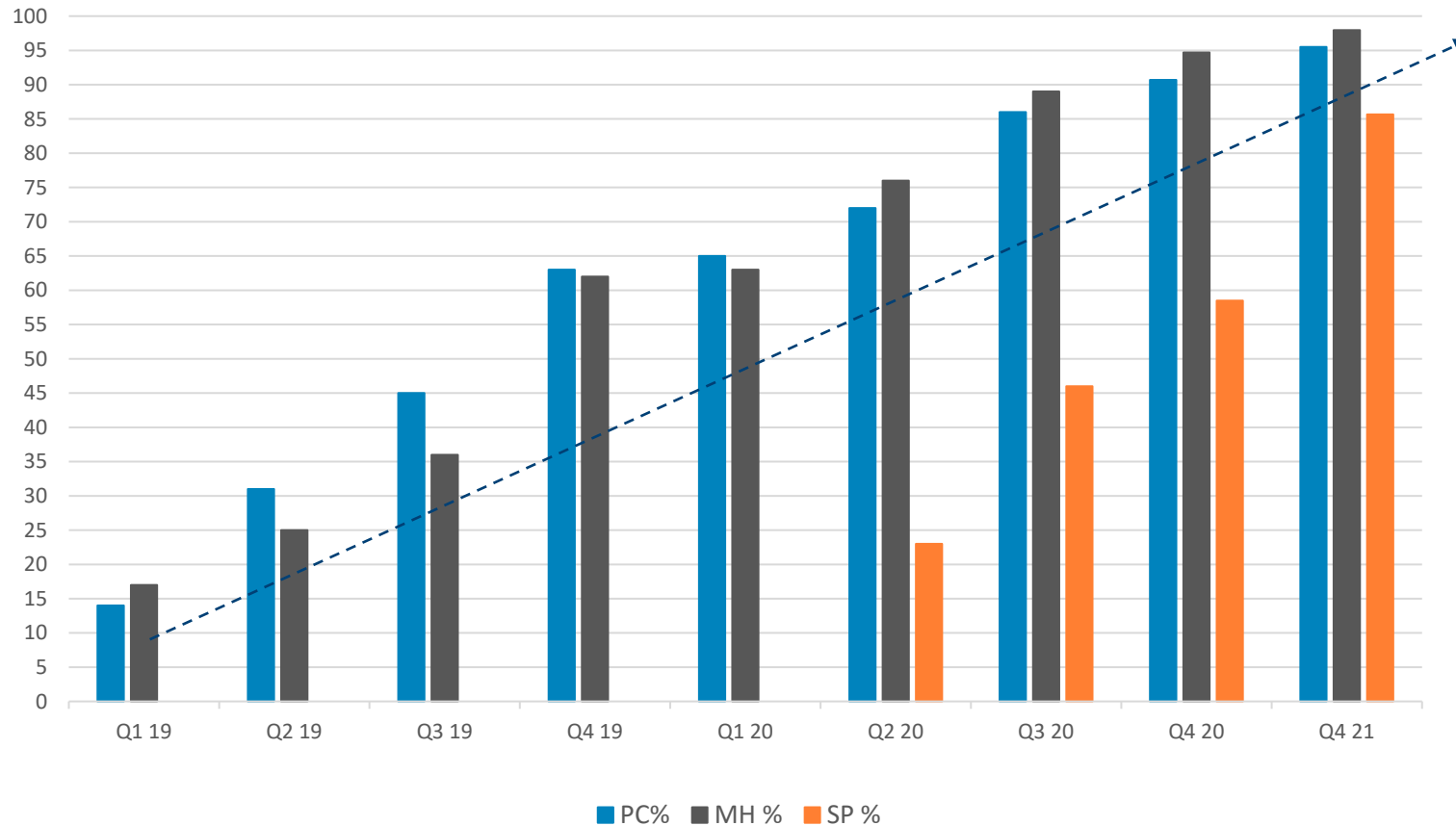
Trends: VA Video Connect to Home

Video Visits to Home or Offsite by Month

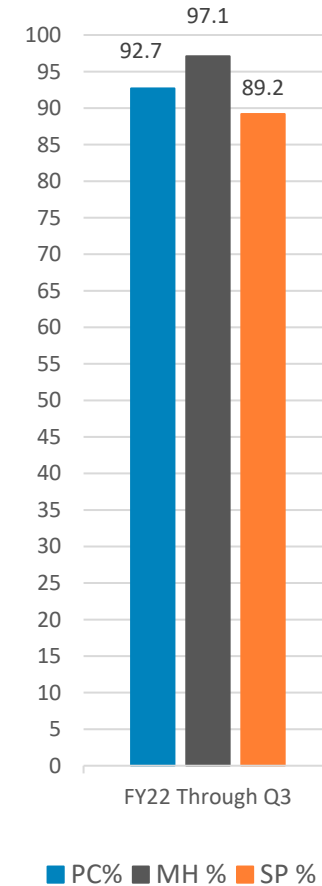


Video in the Home: Video Capable Health Care Professionals

VA Video Connect Capable Health Care Professionals

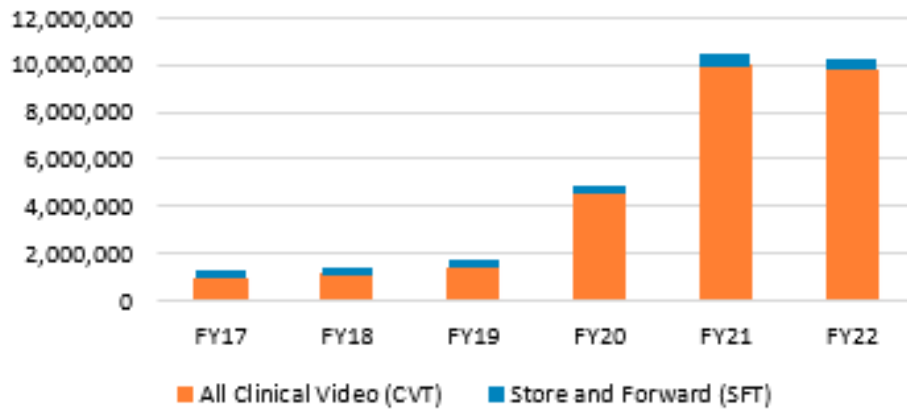


FY22 Through Q3

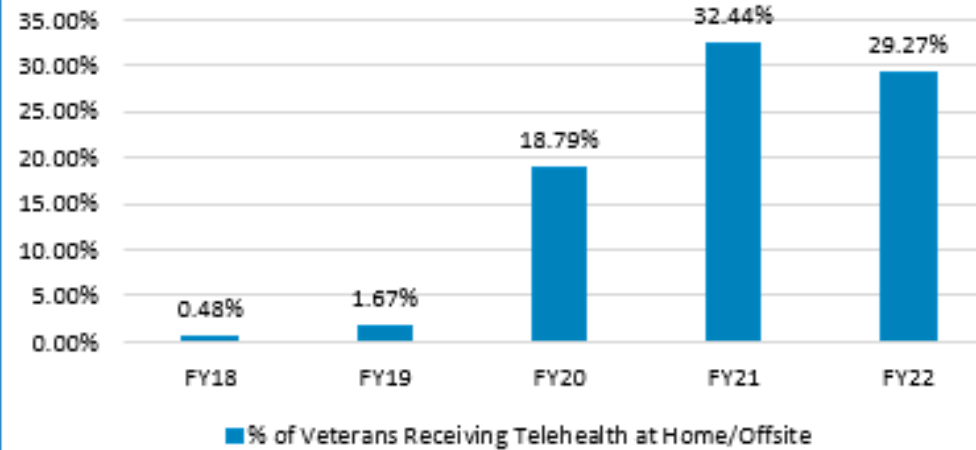


Growth in Connected Care Services

Clinical Video and Store and Forward Telehealth Encounters



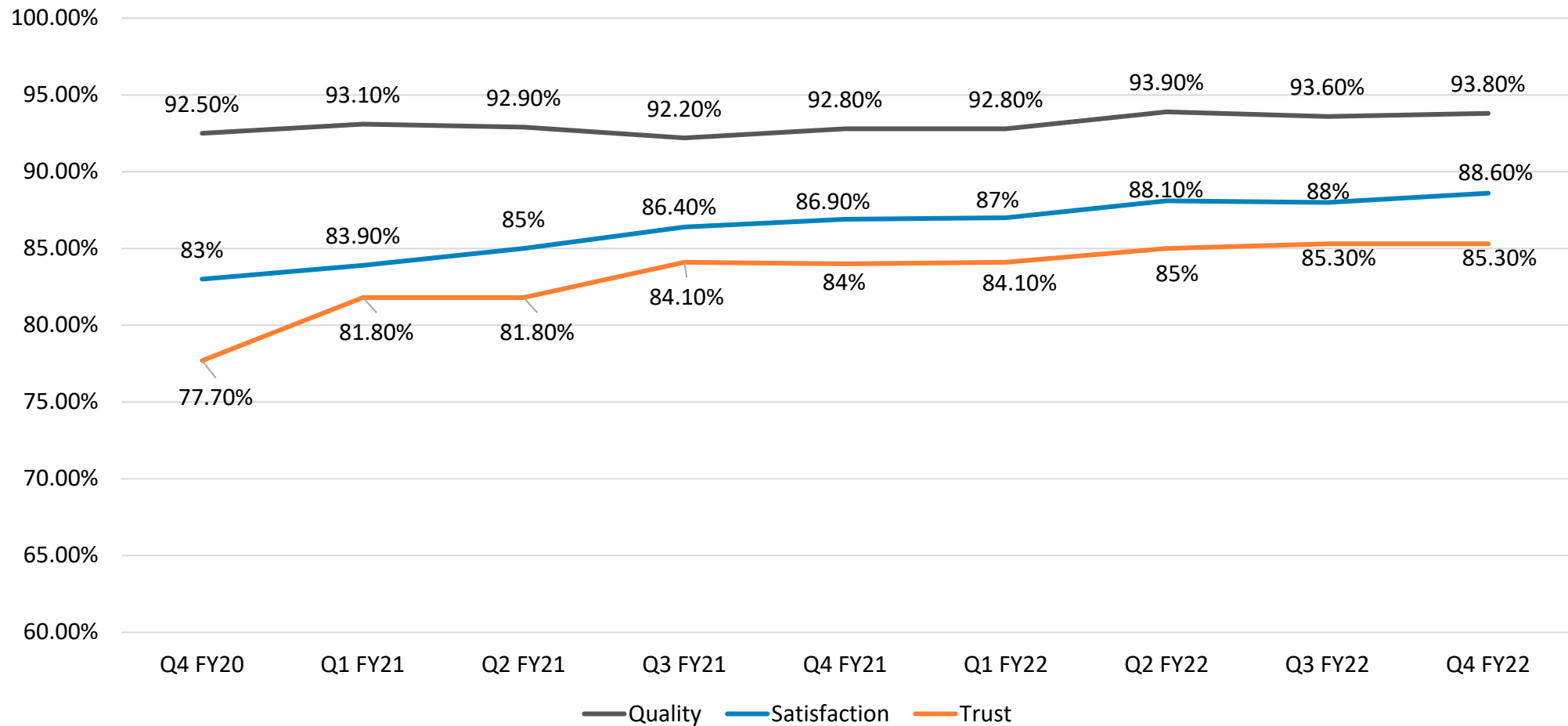
% of Veterans Receiving Telehealth at Home/Offsite



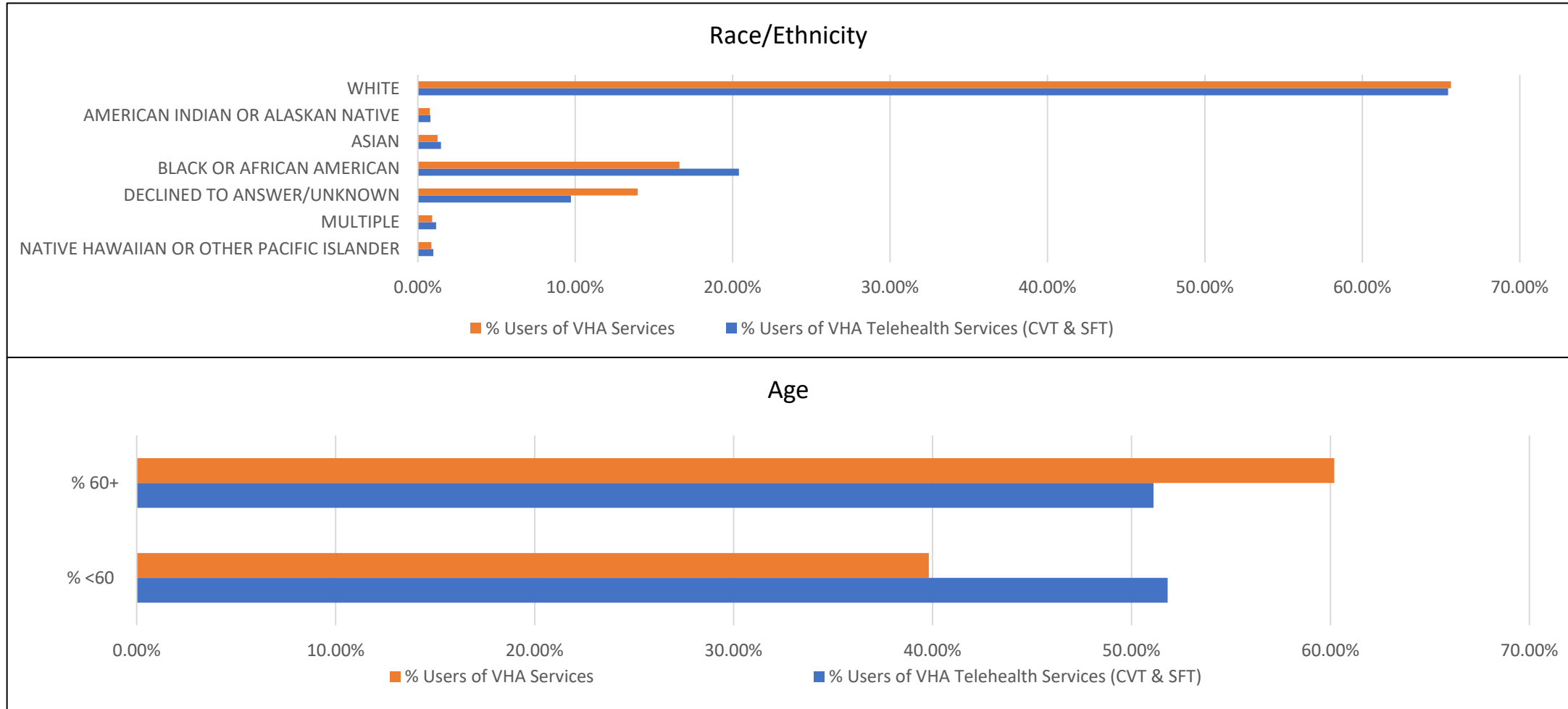
Experience Data (Global Telehealth)

“The VA telehealth program really saved my life when I had COVID-19, because every single day, I had someone who was checking on me at home. My telehealth nurse checked on my symptoms and encouraged me through my feelings of helplessness and depressive episodes.”

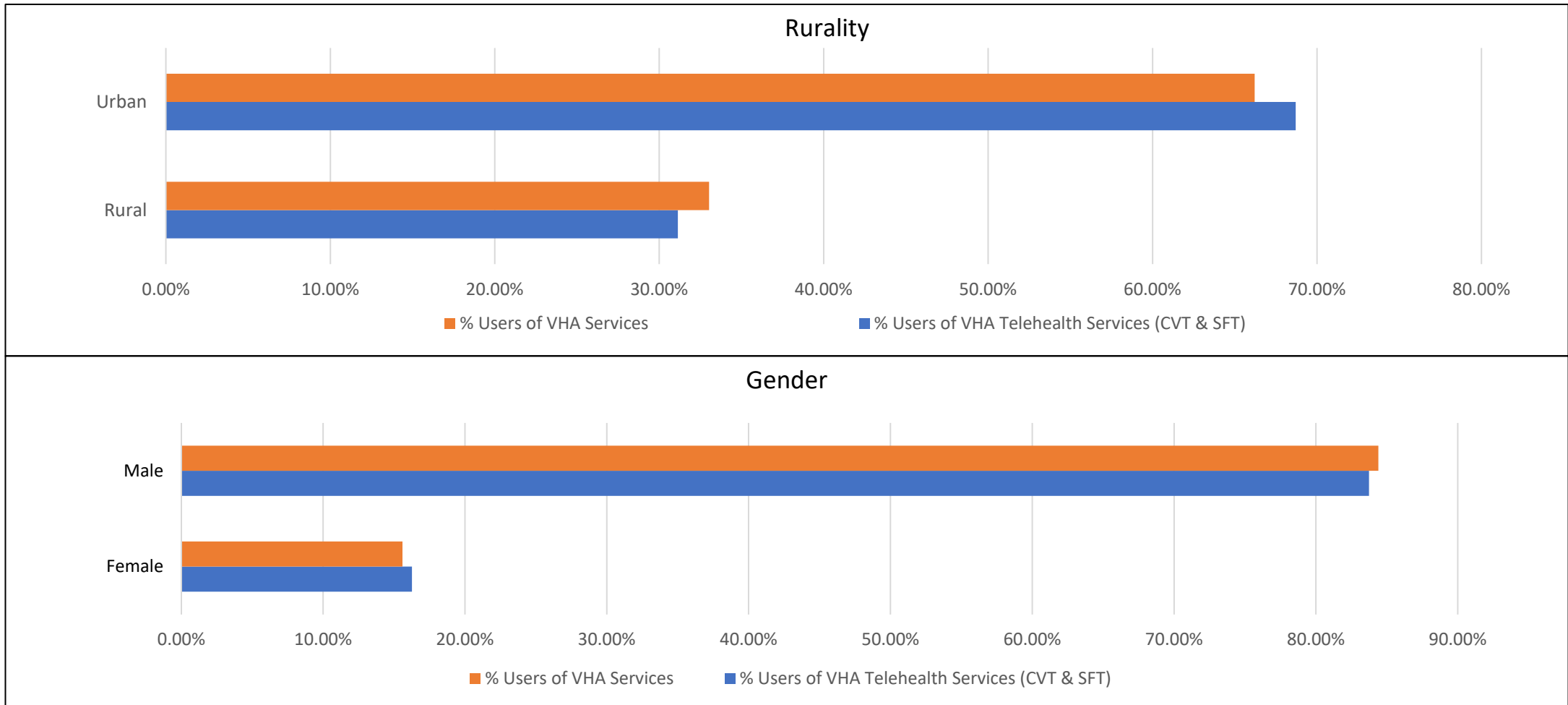
Veteran Telehealth Experience: Quality, Satisfaction, and Trust



Utilization (FY22): Encouraging Data Overall Regarding Equitable Utilization of Telehealth



Utilization (FY22): Encouraging Data Overall Regarding Equitable Utilization of Telehealth (cont.)



Bridging the Digital Divide

For Veterans who don't have internet service or an internet-connected device in their home, accessing telehealth can be difficult.

VA has implemented a variety of initiatives to increase Veterans' access to telehealth services and infrastructure so that Veterans can access care wherever they are.

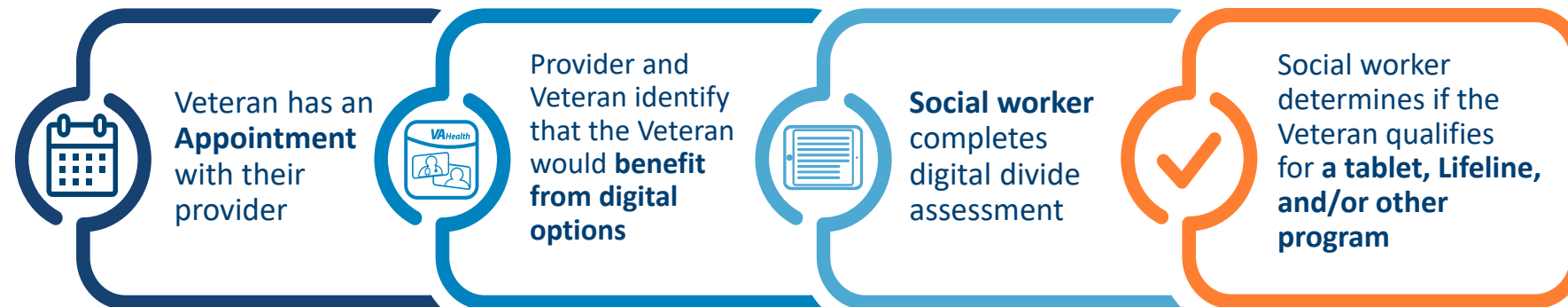


The Digital Divide Consult

Fifteen percent of Veteran households do not have an internet connection.

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC), 2019

The Digital Divide Consult is a process that connects Veterans who don't have internet access or a video-capable device with programs and resources that provide internet service or technology needed for VA video visits.



ATLAS: Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations



<https://youtu.be/h4KYpIR5Kjc>

Wickenburg, AZ

American Legion Post #12 - Kellis-Draper

176 N Frontier St, Wickenburg, AZ
85390

Mon – Fri | 10am – 3:30pm

Associated VA Medical

Center: [Phoenix VA Health Care System – Phoenix, AZ](#) and [Northern Arizona VA Health Care System - Prescott, AZ](#)

Contact:

[Phoenix VA Medical Center Call Center](#) | (602) 277-5551 x 6550 or
(602) 277-5551 x 2251

[Northern Arizona VA Health Care System Call Center](#) | (928) 445-
4860 x 2183

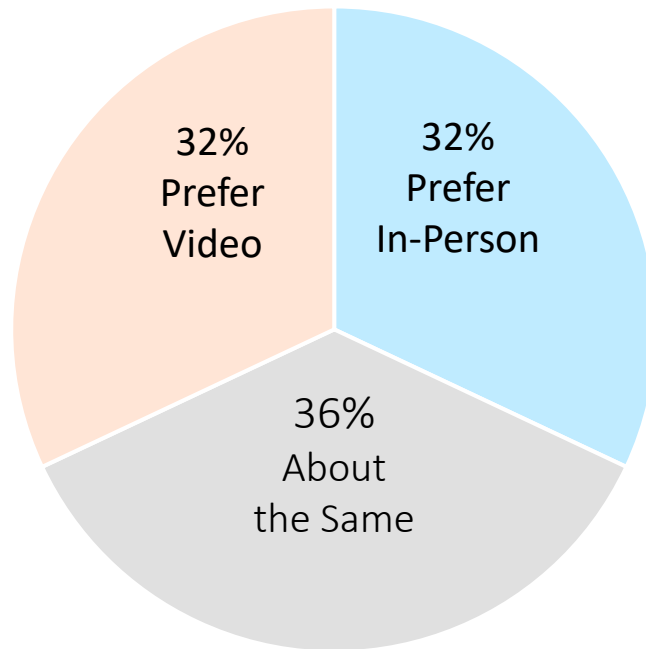
Cellular Carrier Program

Offering free mobile connectivity for telehealth.

- AT&T, SafeLink by TracFone, T-Mobile, and Verizon help Veteran subscribers avoid data charges when using VA Video Connect on their networks. This enables Veterans to access their VA care teams through telehealth with fewer worries about data fees.
- [Learn more information and limitations](#) specific to each of VA's cellular partners.

VA Connected Devices: Outcomes

Many tablet recipients would like their future visits to be by video



Slightam C, et al.,
J of Med Int Research, 2020

>80% report cost and time savings



Jacobs JC, et al.,
Telemedicine and e-Health, 2020

VA Connected Devices: Outcomes (cont.)

Tablets improve mental health care access and continuity

↑ **psychotherapy visits**
particularly among Veterans
at high risk for suicide
~2 more visits in 6 weeks

↑ **medication management visits**
~1 more visit in 6 weeks

↑ **continuity**
18% more likely to have
3 MH visits in 6 weeks

↓ **missed appointments**
20% less likely to have a missed
or canceled appointment

Jacobs JC, et al.
Psychiatric Services, 2019

Tablets decrease suicide-related visits among rural Veterans

↓ **in ED visits**
Suicide-related ED visits,
suicide behavior/overdose

↑ **use of MH care**
by video

↑ **psychotherapy visits**
across all modalities

Kritee Gujral, PhD et al.,
JAMA Netw Open 2022

Other Programs

Lifeline Program

The FCC's **Lifeline** program subsidizes the cost of home broadband and phone services. Lifeline provides eligible subscribers with up to **\$9.25 a month** for phone and internet services **or up to \$34.25 per month** for those living on tribal and native lands.

Many Veterans are eligible for FCC Lifeline benefits, including **Veterans with low incomes** and **Veterans who participate in the following federal programs:**

- Federal public housing assistance
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income
- Tribal programs
- VA pension
- VA Survivors Pension

For more information, [visit the Lifeline program webpage](#).

Affordable Connectivity Program

The FCC's **Affordable Connectivity** Program (ACP) provides eligible households with a discount on broadband service and connected devices.

The program provides a discount of up to **\$30 per month** that can be used toward broadband service for eligible households, and up to **\$75 per month** for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Veterans who qualify for Lifeline are also eligible for the ACP program.

For more information, [visit the ACP webpage](#).



Evaluation and Research

Digital Divide Outcomes

- A study of 471,791 rural US Veterans with a history of mental health care use was published on April 6, 2022, by the online Journal of the American Medical Association. The peer-reviewed study found that Veterans receiving a VA tablet were associated with increased use of mental health care via video, increased psychotherapy visits (across all modalities), and reduced suicide behavior and ED visits.

April 6, 2022

Mental Health Service Use, Suicide Behavior, and Emergency Department Visits Among Rural US Veterans Who Received Video-Enabled Tablets During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Kritee Gujral, PhD^{1,2}; James Van Campen, MS^{2,3}; Josephine Jacobs, PhD^{1,2}; [et al](#)

[» Author Affiliations](#) | [Article Information](#)

JAMA Netw Open. 2022;5(4):e226250. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.6250



COVID-19 Resource Center

Thank You!

Questions?

