



NARBHA Telemed

The Picture of Health Since 1996

News from the Network

NARBHA's innovative Telemedicine program won the 2010 Award of Excellence in Health Information Technology, which includes a \$10,000 grant sponsored by Qualifacts Systems, Inc. NARBHAnet serves members across 62,000 square miles in one of the most rugged parts of the country with only a handful of psychiatric practitioners.

Carbon emissions savings: Did you know...

- From July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009, the NARBHA telemedicine network saved over 110,000 miles of driving and over 1900 hours of drive time by 16 psychiatric providers.
- This saved 40.1 tons of CO₂ from being added to earth's atmosphere.
- This doesn't include all the staff who save countless hours of drive time throughout the 62,000 square miles of Northern Arizona by using the telemedicine network for meetings.



Benefits of Telemedicine for Mental Health Services

Access to care / improved care

- Rural patients can receive psychiatric services at their own community clinics instead of having to take time away from work or school to travel long distances.
- Patients are seen sooner and more frequently because they don't have to travel or wait for a practitioner to visit their town.
- Emergency and crisis evaluations can be connected instantly.
- Both providers and patients experience decreased travel time, expense, and stress.
- Wait times for psychiatric patients to be re-seen are greatly reduced or eliminated.
- Area residents have access to a much broader range of behavioral health experts, improving quality and choice of care.
- In Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas such as northern Arizona, clinics are able to expand their recruitment of psychiatric practitioners to include the entire country. Providers with Arizona licensure are currently seeing NARBHA patients from offices in three other states.
- Patients experience less practitioner turnover.
- Specialists from remote cities are available for consults.
- Inpatients' treatment team members from all over the state can meet.
- Patients experience more of a team treatment model because a case manager, therapist, or nurse is often in the room with the patient during the telemedicine session with the remote psychiatric provider.
- Family members can visit inpatients without having to miss work to travel.



**Child's
drawing
of the
"TV doctor"**

Practitioner recruitment/retention

- Psychiatric practitioners can live wherever they wish, yet serve rural populations.
- Clinicians can stay up to date on the latest research and guidelines through video education, including the University of Arizona's psychiatric grand rounds.
- Practitioners don't have travel burnout. They spend their time seeing patients instead of driving. (This allowed an additional 1,225 patient sessions to take place on NARBHA's telemedicine network in 2008 alone!)
- Clinicians can easily meet with colleagues and develop camaraderie with remote agency staff.

