

\$5 Million Investment to Expand Access to Telehealth Services

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Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, DHS will use \$2.5 million to expand and enhance child psychiatry telehealth services. The rest to fund community connections.

APPLETON — On Wednesday Gov. Tony Evers, together with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), announced a \$5 million investment to make telehealth services, including mental and behavioral health services, more accessible by bolstering child psychiatry telehealth services and establishing neighborhood telehealth access points.



“The past two years have challenged our kids in more ways than we ever could have imagined, from the loss of a loved one to changes in routines and social connections. We know they are struggling perhaps now more than ever,” said Gov. Evers. “And they aren’t the only ones—many adults are working to overcome substance use disorders and mental health challenges as well. This investment in telehealth services is critical, as telehealth can bridge the gaps between patients and providers by offering more flexibility and convenience in accessing healthcare, reducing the stigma and increasing the availability of mental and behavioral health services, and ensuring folks can meet with a healthcare professional no matter where they

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live.”

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, DHS will use \$2.5 million of the investment to create a new grant program for hospitals and health systems to expand and enhance child psychiatry telehealth services. This program will build on the governor’s efforts to support child mental health, including his [Get Kids Ahead Initiative](#) which will provide \$15 million for schools to invest in school-based mental health services for kids. Through the \$2.5 million program announced today, up to five one-year grants of approximately \$500,000 will be awarded to hospitals and health systems across the state. Applications are due by 3 p.m., Fri., May 6, 2022. More information to apply is available [here](#).

Additionally, the remaining \$2.5 million of this investment will be used for a grant program for providers to partner with community organizations to establish neighborhood telehealth access points at food pantries, homeless shelters, libraries, long-term care facilities, community centers, and schools for people with limited access to technology and reliable internet service. One-year grants of up to \$100,000 each will be awarded to between 25 and 50 providers across the state. Applications are also due by 3 p.m., Fri., May 6, 2022. More information to apply is available [here](#).

The programs announced today are part of a series of investments funded by the American Rescue Plan Act to transform Wisconsin’s behavioral health system to meet the emerging needs of Wisconsinites. Last year, the Evers Administration committed nearly \$50 million in grants through 2025 to increase community-level supports for mental health and substance use disorders. More information about these investments is available on the DHS website [here](#).