

Sustaining a Telehealth Network: Predictors of Success

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Disclosure

The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)

requires all speakers to make a verbal disclosure of all relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest and the nature of the financial interest *pertaining to this lecture.*

Overview of the Session

- Brief discussion of the “predictors of success”
 - Positioning your network for long-term sustainability
- Implementation or program expansion hints

Predictors of Success

The most common theme among successful telehealth programs is that the goals of the telehealth program are consistent with the mission of the overall organization

More Predictors of Success

- “Support From the Top” – Administrative support
 - Internal funding AND grant funding
 - Assignment of staff necessary to implement and operate the program
 - Multiple goals that meet the organization’s mission
- Is a team approach being used?
 - Clinical
 - Financial
 - Technical
 - Instructor
 - Operational – The SITE COORDINATOR

Clinical Leadership

- A qualified, credible clinician champion
 - Good listener, and able to respond to concerns
 - Appreciation that clinicians should have autonomy to determine how he/she wants to provide service
 - Seniority in the organization to bring people “to the table”
 - Should not be considered the “Techie” of the medical staff

GOAL: to develop several clinician champions

Financial and Strategic Planning

- Business modeling is critical to the success of telehealth
 - Contract negotiations & establish rates
 - “Speak the language” of third party payors
 - Build the case for internal funding
 - Understanding the financial incentives that draw physicians to participate
 - Collect the data that illustrates the “delta” between traditional care and new models of care

Technical

- Able to communicate effectively with patient care staff while performing daily duties
- Responsible for
 - complex telecommunications and networking issues
 - equipment installation, maintenance and troubleshooting

Telemedicine Coordinator

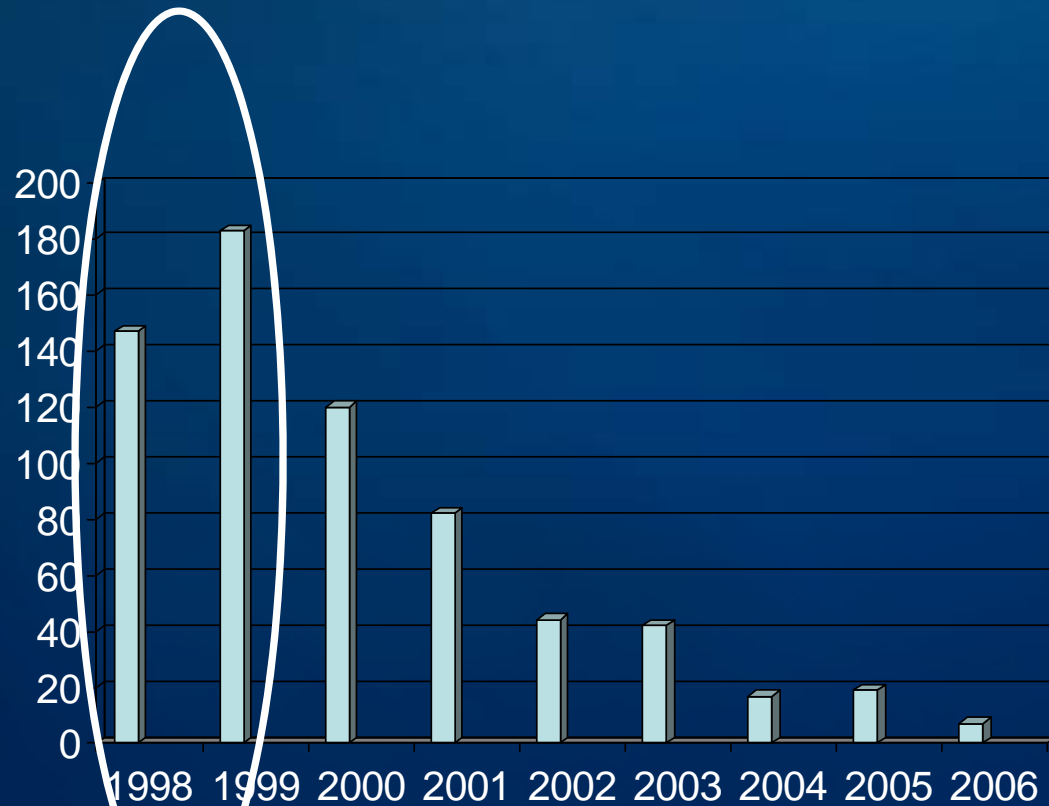
RESPONSIBILITIES

- Program promotion
- Program coordination
- Clinic administration
- Patient care coordination
- Education & outreach
- Operate video-conferencing equipment

HIRING CONSIDERATIONS

- Familiar with clinic operations, & respected by medical staff
- Computer proficient
- Organizational skills with multi-tasking capabilities
- Problem solving, customer service & diplomacy skills

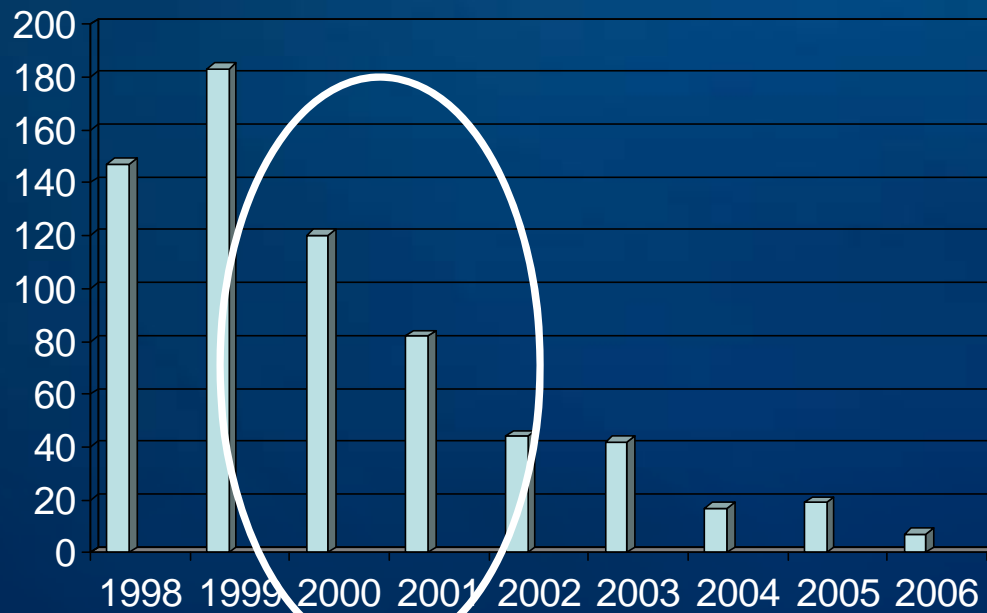
Community Hospital & Primary Care Clinic Sonora, CA



Medical Director
25%

Telemedicine
Coordinator
100%

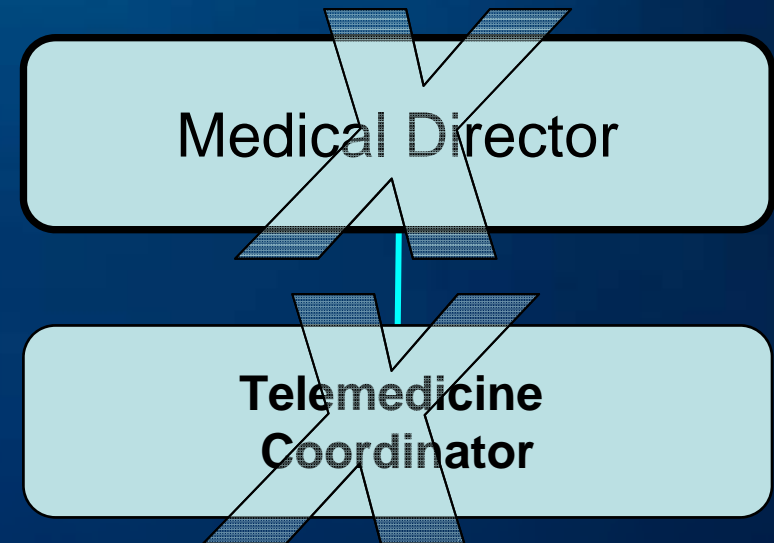
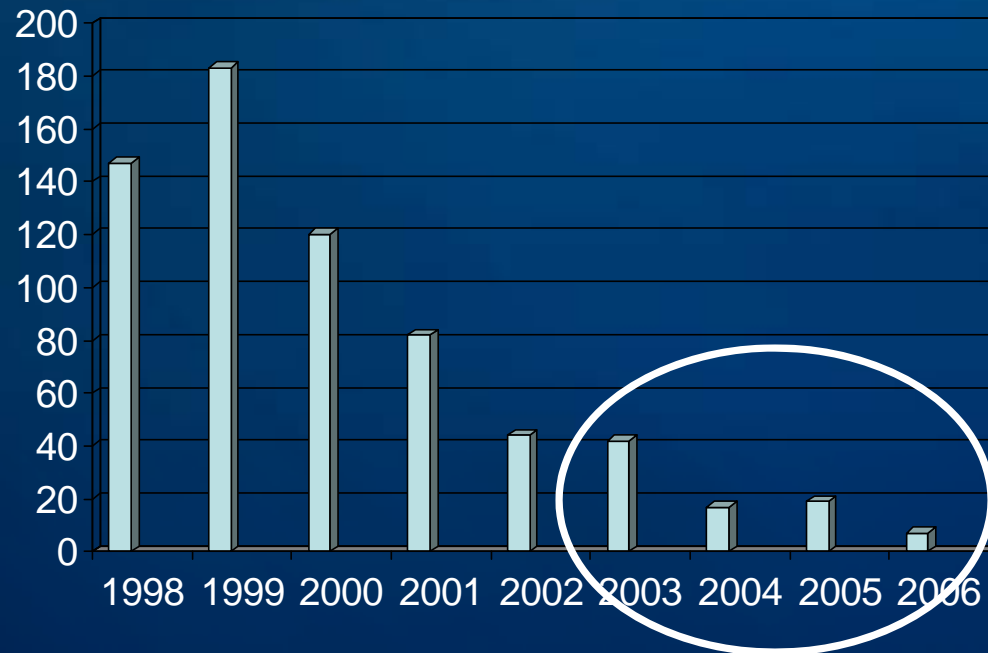
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~~Medical Director~~

Telemedicine
Coordinator
50%

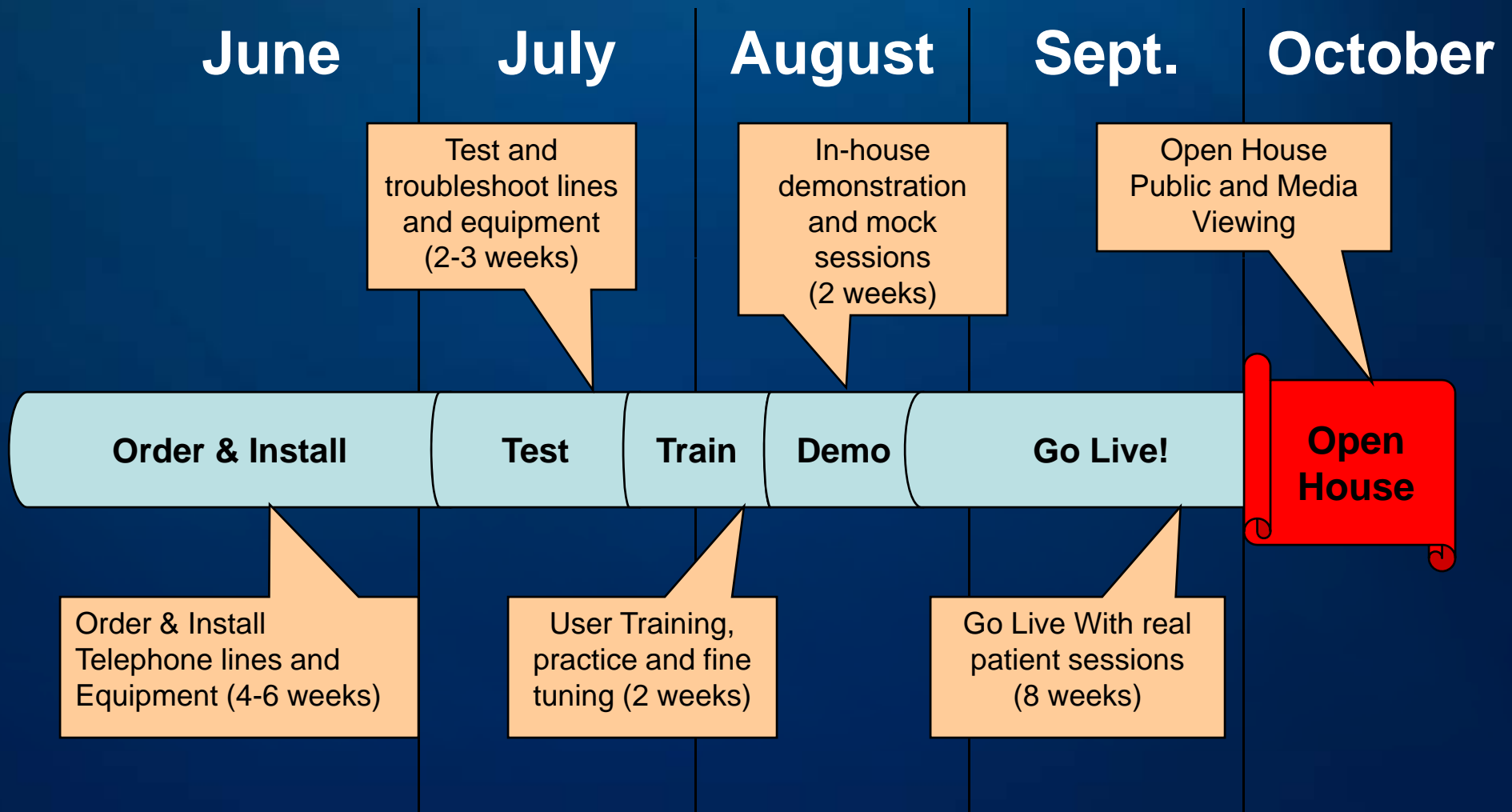
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Another Predictor of Success

Responsible, conservative implementation
(or expansion) timeline

Realistic Implementation Timeline



Common Technical Challenges

- Line installation delays 3-8 weeks
 - 👉 specify firm deadline date
- Line installation errors - configured or labeled incorrectly
 - 👉 specific, detailed order form
- Intermittent connection problems – “all circuits are busy”
 - 👉 notify Telco. anticipated usage requirements

Common Operational Challenges

- Software, hardware, A/V, user error
 - 👉 *fine tuning, training and practice*
- TM coordinator calls in sick on date of consult – no back-up trained
 - 👉 *train 2-3 individuals as back-up*
- No referrals
 - 👉 *increase physician awareness & address clinician obstacles*

Increase Clinician Awareness

- Video demonstrations
 - link to partner sites
- Participate in CME presentations
- Arrange “Meet and Greet” sessions with specialists
- Work with clinicians and referral coordinators to re-route some of the back logged patients

Common Clinician Challenges

- Physicians=Scientists=Skeptical
 - 👉 *Increase physician awareness*
- Disrupting existing referral patterns
 - 👉 *Utilize telemedicine to fill a need*

Common Clinician Challenges

- Specialist concerns about effectiveness
 - 👍 *It's acceptable to request an in-person exam*
- Inconvenience
 - 👍 *Equipment placement, “seamless” operations*

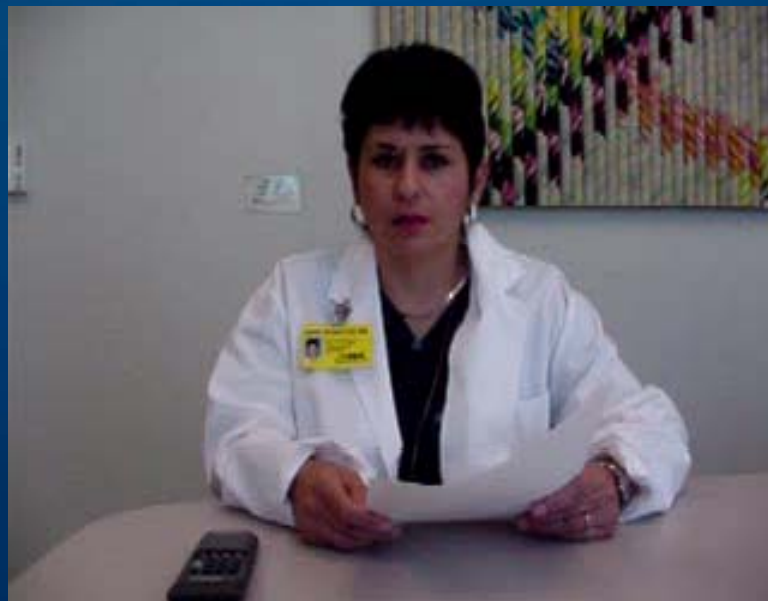
Yet Another Predictor

Operational documentation and training
(technical & operational)

Consideration



Confidentiality



Another Theme Associated with Successful Programs

As the program evolves, diversify to meet multiple goals

Sustaining a Regional Network

- Evaluate the climate of your state or region and understand the history
 - Example: California is an “open system” (many spoke sites receive services from multiple hub sites. This requires technology that provides options)
 - Single “HQ” states employ different strategies
- Develop a mutual understanding of hub and spoke operations
- Strike a balance between competition and cooperation

Questions & Answers

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