

Media Contact:

Evan Swarztrauber, (202) 418-2261
evan.swarztrauber@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

Commissioner Carr Highlights FCC Focus on Telemedicine at UVA Health System

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On Monday, July 2, FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr [visited](#) the University of Virginia Health System in Charlottesville, Virginia. Dr. Karen Rheuban, an expert in telehealth, hosted Commissioner Carr at UVA. The visit focused on how high-speed broadband networks increase access to and lower the cost of healthcare, especially in rural and low-income areas that often lack the same access to affordable healthcare options as those living in other parts of the country.

“The current trend in telehealth is a movement from healthcare delivered inside brick-and-mortar facilities to connected care everywhere,” said Commissioner Carr. “Inside hospitals and clinics, patients now have access to the most cutting-edge, broadband-enabled technologies. And the FCC has played a significant role in helping to support and promote broadband deployments to these facilities. When patients leave the doors of those facilities, their access to high-tech healthcare services often drops off. Connected care technologies are helping to fill that gap. From pediatric cardiology to opioid dependency treatment, remote patient monitoring and mobile health apps can greatly reduce costs and improve outcomes. Spending time with the teams at UVA helped me learn more about the trend toward connected care everywhere and how the FCC can help promote remote patient monitoring and related telehealth technologies.”



Commissioner Carr began his tour at the [UVA’s Children’s Hospital](#), where he learned about their pediatric cardiology program, which brings high-tech care to the home. With an iPad and a Locus Health app, daily weight, heart rate, and oxygen levels can be tracked remotely, which decreases the need for high-risk pediatric patients to undergo ICU stays and invasive procedures.

Commissioner Carr then headed to UVA’s Karen S. Rheuban Center for

Telehealth, where they use connected insulin pumps and home blood sugar monitors to improve average blood sugars for patients. Chronic disease management accounts for about 80% of direct healthcare spending. Diabetes management is an area where remote patient monitoring and connected care can have a big impact.



When treating a stroke, time is brain. And for every 60 seconds a stroke goes untreated, another two million neurons and seven miles of brain fiber are lost. [UVA's Telestroke team](#) explained how connected technologies are making a difference. They demoed their broadband-enabled connection to a rural facility in Culpeper, VA. Rather than a 45-minute transfer when seconds matter, they start stroke treatment immediately from remote locations. They have helped an average of 11 patients per month using this connection.

Commissioner Carr wrapped up the visit with a discussion of how telehealth is also addressing the opioid epidemic, including pain management, education and psychiatry work. [UVA's Dr. Tirouririne and Dr. Salajegheh](#) explained how they're using broadband connections to bring specialist care to remote and rural communities and decreasing the use and dependency on opioids.

Press coverage of Carr's trip:

"FCC Explores Ways to Expand UVA Health Care to Rural Areas," [NBC 29](#)

"What we're now seeing is a new trend, which is this movement towards connected care or care everywhere," Carr said. On his visit, Carr stated "this is part of us learning & seeing how can we support that movement of getting more connections everywhere."

"FCC visits UVA to learn more about telemedicine," [Daily Progress](#)

"There's a lot that we do that tangentially benefits this," Carr said. "But I've been thinking about if there's more that we can do in this connected care model, this role of health care, for us as a commission to continue to support these efforts."

To see more of the trip, follow Commissioner Carr on Twitter [@BrendanCarrFCC](#) and check out [#CarrTrip](#). For press inquiries, contact Evan Swarztrauber at evan.swarztrauber@fcc.gov or (202) 418-2261.

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Office of Commissioner Brendan Carr: (202) 418-2200
ASL Videophone: (844) 432-2275
TTY: (888) 835-5322
Twitter: @BrendanCarrFCC
www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/brendan-carr

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