

# Related Services Update

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## Is your school considering teletherapy?

In the evolving world of healthcare, practitioners must stay up to date on the latest and most effective treatment models. Telehealth is an emerging service delivery model defined by the American Telemedicine Association as “the remote delivery of health care services and clinical information using telecommunication technology.... [including] a wide array of clinical services using internet, wireless, satellite and telephone media” (ATA). Telehealth, and more specifically teletherapy, allows providers in all settings to reach more people.

### This issue:

- Teletherapy
- Technical assistance
- Related service opportunities
- Upcoming trainings

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) states that telehealth “leads to improved access to care and ameliorates the impact of personal shortages in underserved areas” (AOTA). Teletherapy also decreases the time from initial referral, to evaluation, to treatment by eliminating travel constraints and connecting a larger pool of potential providers and clients to one another. Clients with a limited number of providers in their area are able to connect with available practitioners via teletherapy, ultimately shortening wait times and allowing individuals to begin working towards goals quicker. Teletherapy can be especially helpful for clients who have difficulty or are unable to travel for therapy.

Currently, many related service providers travel across the state to see children in rural schools or in districts that do not have that service within the school. While service through technology should not replace face-to-face contact completely, it can be useful when implementing a 3:1 model (3 weeks of direct intervention, 1 week of indirect intervention) or for supervision of COTA's, SLPA's, and PTA's traveling to schools in which their supervisor is not physically present.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has adopted the term telepractice, and states that it “is an appropriate model of service delivery for audiologists and SLPs” as long as providers adhere to the roles and responsibilities that come along with providing services via telepractice and adhere to the code of ethics (ASHA).

As an emerging service delivery model, the research available shows promising results for the use of telepractice by related service providers in the school system. The International Journal of Telerehabilitation (IJT) found that satisfaction ratings by parents were high and found that outcomes were consistent with other models of intervention (Wales, Skinner, Hayman, p56). Practitioners are able to provide services more efficiently via teletherapy because they are able to see more clients in the same amount of time. If you are considering teletherapy for your school, consider the following:

1. Do you have the technology and resources needed to support the services?
2. How will you determine who is appropriate for teletherapy?
3. How will you train your team to prepare for teletherapy?

For more information on teletherapy:

<http://www.americantelemed.org/main/about/about-telemedicine/telemedicine-faqs>

<https://ajot.aota.org/article.aspx?articleid=1853066>

<http://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=858993495&ion=Overview>

<http://www.americantelemed.org/main/about/about-telemedicine/telemedicine-faqs>

Do you have specific questions about related services?

We can provide technical assistance to your school!

Email us at: [twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com](mailto:twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com)

Do you know of a school looking for occupational, speech, or physical therapy? Are you a therapist looking for work in the schools? If so, email me your information and I will add your information to our database and keep you update on availability.

Contact me at [twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com](mailto:twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com)

## Upcoming Trainings & Resources

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### **Thursday, October 12, Oklahoma Autism Center**

“Challenging Behavior in Schools: Part I”

To register: <http://www.autismcenterok.org/content/upcoming-statewide-trainings>

### **Friday, October 13, 2017, Oklahoma Autism Network**

“Autism and the Digital Age”

To register: Call 405-271-7476 or email [okautism@ouhsc.edu](mailto:okautism@ouhsc.edu)