

# Telehealth Part 3: Gifts of the Pandemic

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Great Lakes Addiction, Mental  
Health and Prevention  
Technology Transfer Center  
February 15, 2021

# Brought To You By:



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January 2021

# Language Matters

The use of affirming language inspires hope and advances recovery.

**LANGUAGE MATTERS.**

**Words have power.**

**PEOPLE FIRST.**

The ATTC Network uses affirming language to promote the promises of recovery by advancing evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

The use of affirming language inspires hope.

**LANGUAGE MATTERS.**

**Words have power.**

**PEOPLE FIRST.**

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

The MHTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

Adapted from: [https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide\\_2019ed\\_v1\\_20190809-Web.pdf](https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide_2019ed_v1_20190809-Web.pdf)



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## A few housekeeping items:

- If you are having technical issues, please individually message Kristina Spannbauer or Stephanie Behlman in the **chat section at the bottom of your screen** and they will be happy to assist you.
- If you have questions, please put them in the Q&A section at the bottom of your screen.
- The recording and a pdf of the slides will be available on our websites in a week.

# Thank You for Joining Us!

A few more housekeeping items:

- You will be sent link following the presentation to a very short survey – we would really appreciate it if you could fill it out. It takes about 3 minutes.
- Certificates of attendance will be sent out to all who attended the full session. They will be sent via email.

A close-up photograph of several social media icons on white keyboard keys. The icons include Pinterest (red circle with white 'P'), Snapchat (yellow square with white ghost), Instagram (purple-to-orange gradient square with white camera outline), Facebook (blue square with white 'f'), and Twitter (blue bird silhouette). The keys are arranged in a grid pattern, and the background is a light gray surface.

## Follow Us On Social Media!

Facebook and Twitter:

- @GreatLakesATTC
- @GMhttc
- @GLPTTC

# Presenter



**Shelia Weix, MSN, RN, CARN**



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

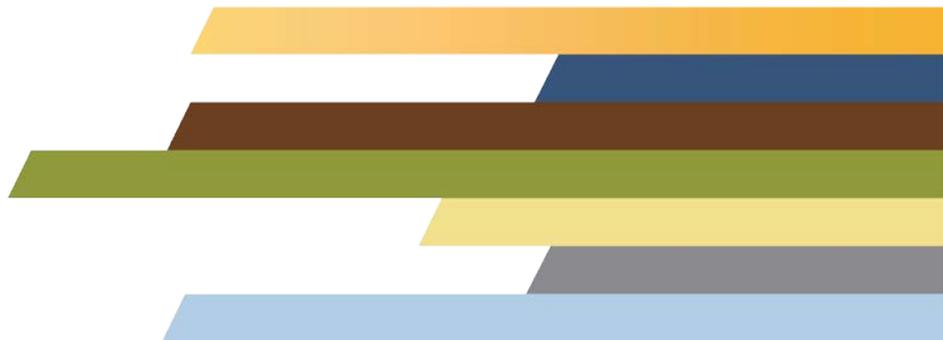
**ATTC**

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

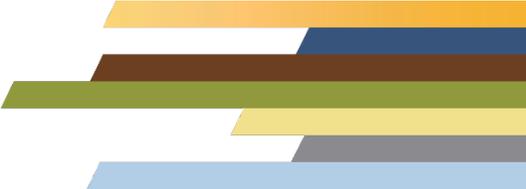
# Gifts of the Pandemic: Opportunity in Chaos

Sheila Weix MSN, RN, CARN



# Objectives

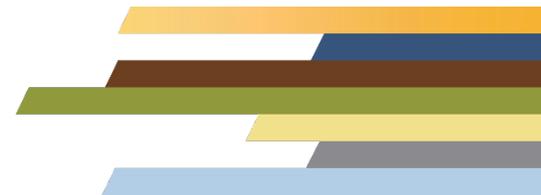


- Participants will recognize some of the opportunities that have resulted from the impact of the pandemic.
  - Participants will explore the role of resilience in provider responses to service needs during the pandemic as a path to opportunities.
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# My Background

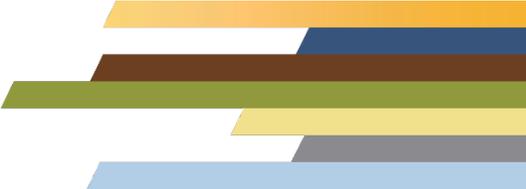


- Registered Nurse by education and practice
- SUD work since the mid-1980s
- Acute care, full continuum of SUD services including private and public
- Currently Director of SUD services for an FQHC



# February 2020



- Business as usual (BAU)
  - Primarily in-person services
  - Groups, crowded waiting rooms
  - Telehealth between clinics
  - People could just stop in for paperwork, etc.
  - Staff offices busy with multiple contacts
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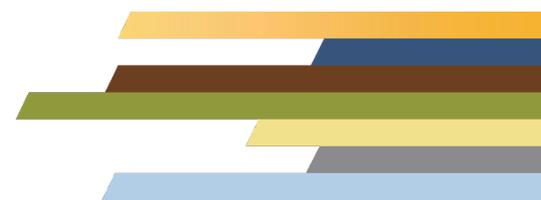
# When the Pandemic Arrived



# March 2020

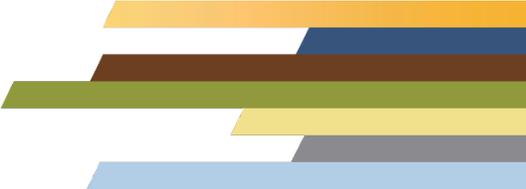


- Had been hearing about a new respiratory illness since January
- Initially it seemed far away across the world and then it began to cover the world with rapidly escalating infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths
- Safer-at-Home order and BAU screeched to a halt



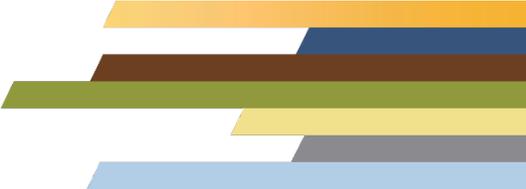
# Immediate Challenges



- Pivot to full telehealth delivery
  - Multiple regulatory requirements placed on emergency hold
  - Payment allowed for services that were not covered before: telephone appointments
  - Staff & patients had to adjust to multiple changes & challenges
- 

# February 2021



- And, here we are...
  - Pandemic still active with variants developing
  - Vaccines available, but not to everyone, yet
  - Many deaths in the communities where we serve and live
  - Disruption in organic supports including jobs, schools, family contact and recovery meetings
- 

# February 2021

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- Substance use is up
  - 500,000 UDTs during pandemic showed increases
  - Cocaine 10% Methamphetamine 20%
  - Heroin 13% Fentanyl 32% (*drugabuse.gov*)
- Alcohol increases
  - 54% increase in sales 3/20; 262% online increase
  - Consumption: 3 of 4 adults +1 day/month
  - Women: 41% over baseline for heavy drinking (*Pollard, jamanetwork.com*)

# Treatment Impacts

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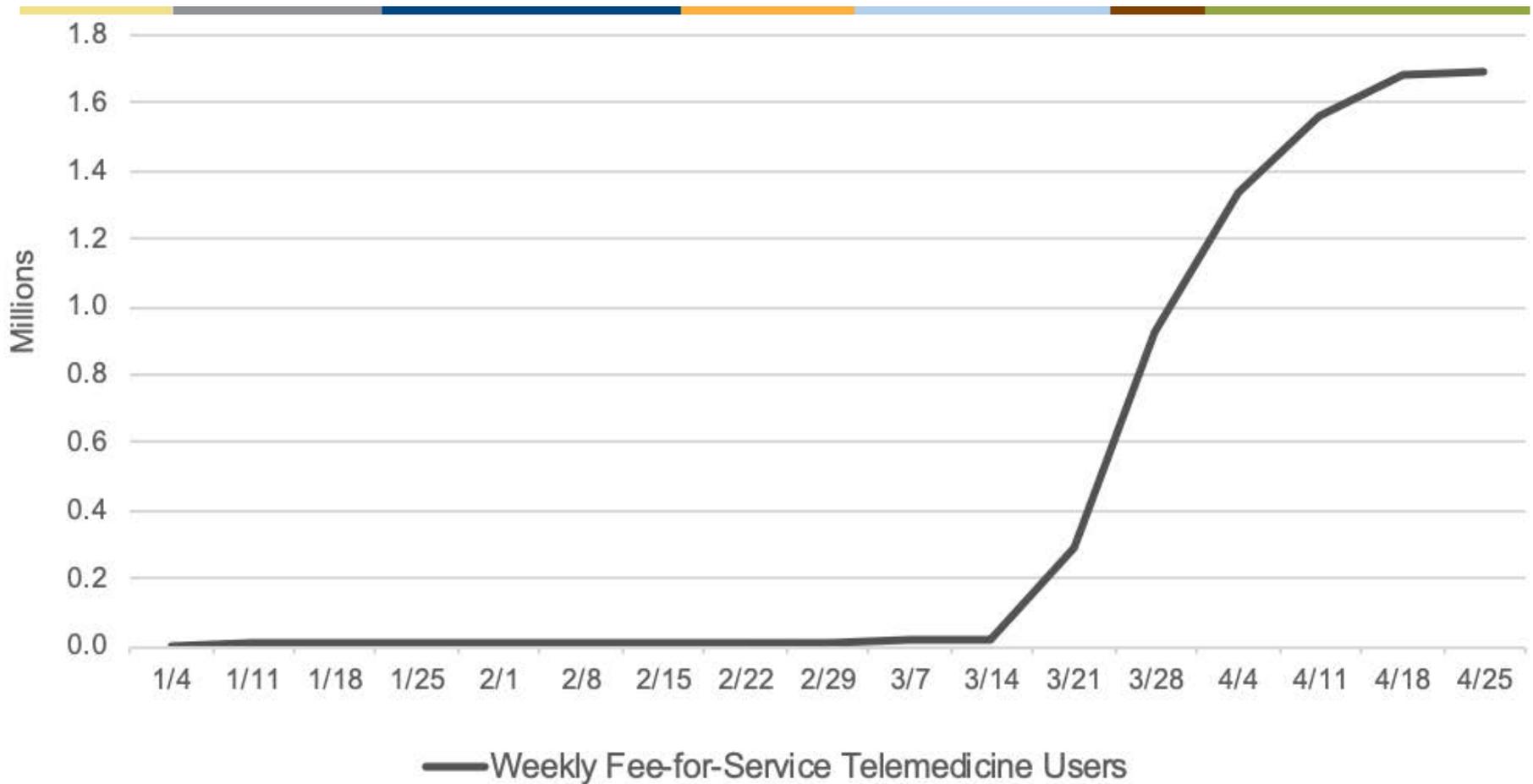
- Telehealth reasonable for outpatient but not higher levels of care
  - Residential: 75-80% occupancy to break even
  - 50% occupancy allowed
- Internet access extremely limited: telephone services may be the only access
- Staff are tired, isolated and experiencing all of the emotions present in the rest of the population
- 2020 was more than the pandemic!

# About Those “Gifts”??

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- Disruption
- Rapid change to delivery systems
  - 1964 University of Nebraska video consultations to state hospital
  - 1996 study showing equivalent outcomes with e-group and in-person AND greater patient satisfaction with convenience, confidentiality of e-services (*King, et al*)
  - 50+ years and then in 1 month: BOOM!

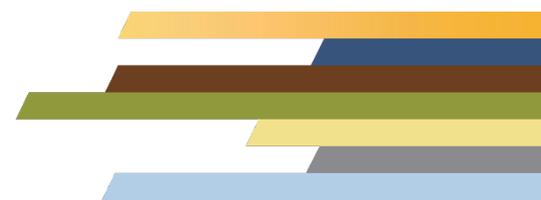
# Impact: CMS (*Verma*)



# Why the Delay?

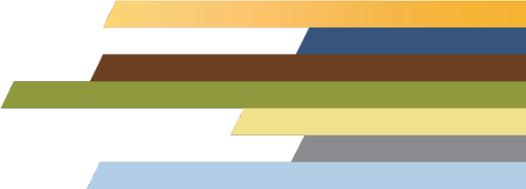


- Dinosaurs: we do what we do until we cannot
- Payment
- Regulatory barriers
- Organizational barriers



# Current Status: Patients

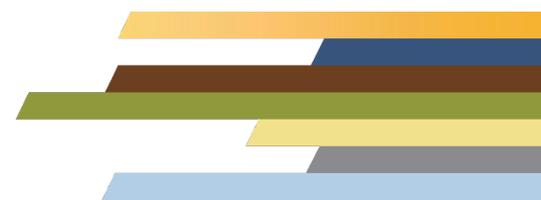


- Mixed bag
  - Some individuals will struggle to return to in-person due to childcare, jobs and transportation and weather
  - Others, absolutely need the in-person to connect, particularly during initiation
  - Groups: more technology support needed to allow access for many
  - Likely answer: hybrid model
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# Current Status: Staff

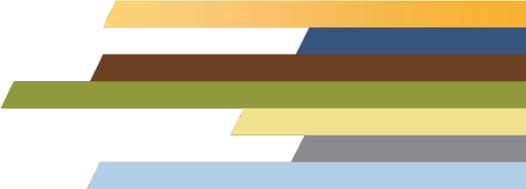
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- Again, mixed bag
- Some providers doing amazing work connecting via technology
- Removal of barriers including travel, bad roads, work hours and physical limitations
- May extend careers as tenured staff approach retirement
- Others really need the in-person contacts and there are time-boundary concerns



# Current Status: Agencies

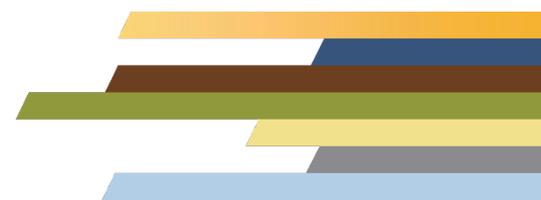


- Reimbursement: Emergency rules are time-limited
    - Major revision of regulations and requirements underway
    - Commercial insurances vary
    - Follow state updates closely
  - Staff education and CEUs: far more reasonable under the pandemic limitations with virtual conferences, no travel or hotel
  - Staff churning
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# Opportunity

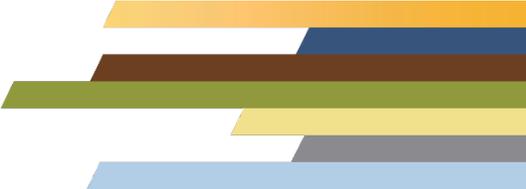


- Take a deep breath: You are going through a once-in-a lifetime (or more) experience, but you ARE here
- Look up from the day to day and do a critical assessment of what and how things are working
- We cannot recognize opportunity unless we are open to it
- Dandelions: noxious weeds or lunch, joy and pollinator support?



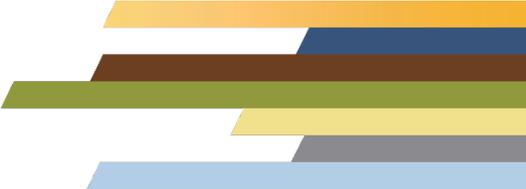
# Moving Forward



- Seek feedback from patients and staff:
    - What is working?
    - What would be even better if?
  - Determine what can continue regardless of regulatory changes: what you can actually control
  - Be prepared to respond to reimbursement and other changes that can support your service
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# Make Conscious Decisions



- Much of the past year has been reactions to rapidly changing situations beyond our control
  - Look at your data
  - Plan for your practice post-Covid
  - Be prepared for something that looks very different than the past decades: what about all of those forms???
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# Practice the Skills of Resilience

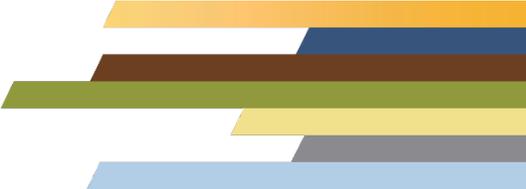
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## Seven Skills of Resilience

- 1: Cultivate a Belief in Your Ability to Cope.
- 2: Stay Connected With Sources of Support.
- 3: Talk About What You're Going Through.
- 4: Be Helpful to Others.
- 5: Activate Positive Emotion.
- 6: Cultivate an **Attitude** of Survivorship.
- 7: Seek Meaning.

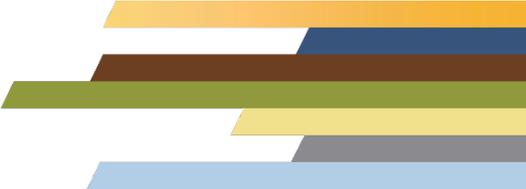
*King, Seven Skills of Resilience: Psychology Today*

*March 31, 2020*

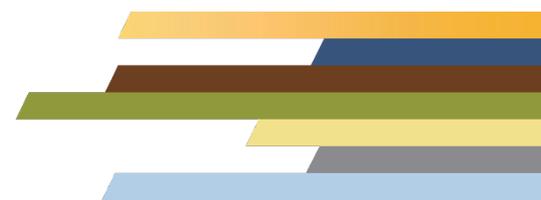


# In Closing



- While chaos is challenging, opportunity does bring loss and giving up of the familiar
  - We have the opportunity to go forward with changes that can make a positive difference for the people we serve and how we provide that service...will we?
  - Remember: Life continued AFTER the dinosaurs!
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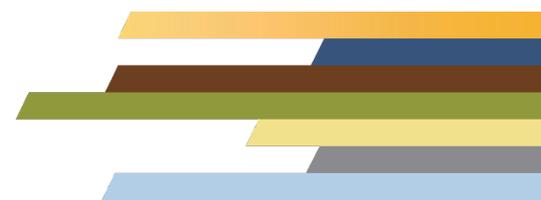
# And Life Goes On...



# Questions?

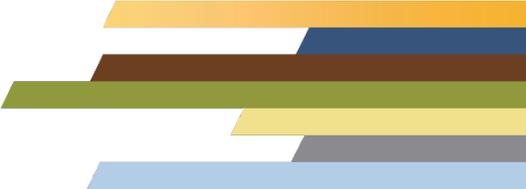


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