The Patterson Foundation (TPF) created its Digital Access for All (DA4A) initiative to explore the efforts of multiple sectors working to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being.

Connecting Older Adults to Telehealth Services
By Linda Snyder, Vice President Government Affairs and Policy, MCR Health

Recent data collected by MCR Health related to patients we served in skilled nursing facilities and our in-house facility office visits showed overwhelming benefits to patients who utilized Telehealth during the pandemic.

Patients served in skilled nursing facilities received constant communication from MCR staff directly to their facility teams through Telehealth Kits, including an iPad and Bluetooth speakers with a case to equip them with the tools needed to conduct visits.

Because of the relationships with the facilities and our residents, if the residents encountered an obstacle, the facility staff assisted to ensure the visit took place. Many residents told our providers that it is nice to see a smiling face on the screen rather than a mask. We knew that the population we served was scared and needed the therapy we provide now more than ever.

Challenges that both patients and providers encountered included a lack of internet services, primarily in rural and low-income areas. MCR involved an alternative to the audio/video visit by conducting an audio visit via phone.

Emergency Broadband Benefit Update
By Kiarra Louis

It's not too late to register for The Emergency Broadband Benefit. Eligible households can enroll through an approved provider or by visiting GetEmergencyBroadband.org.

Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Enrollments and Claims Tracker

| Total Households Enrolled Weekly Nationally (as of July 11, 2021) | 3,571,269 |
| Total Households Enrolled in Florida (as of July 13) | 202,070 |

This tracker is updated on a weekly and monthly basis. You can find more current numbers here.
to address this issue. Providers encountered problems primarily with older patients not understanding how to connect to both audio and video. As a solution, providers were educated on how to direct the patient on accessing both video and audio (typically, the audio would connect and not video or video and no audio). It was more difficult with phone vs. computer. To assist, MCR deployed its IS team to help the patients get connected by guiding them through the process. This would occur after hours as well since some visits were after hours.

Telehealth proved to be an extremely crucial linkage to skilled nursing and in-office patients during the pandemic by aiding all who utilized and still utilize the service.

Pandemic Recovery: One Year Later
By Justin Garcia, Sarasota Herald-Tribune

In South Florida, a coalition of community, health, and technology groups have developed an innovative project to bring digital access to all in the area. During Palm Beach County's stay-at-home orders at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the community realized just how many residents lacked fundamental digital access. In April of 2020, the Economic Council of Palm Beach County and the Palm Beach County school district led initial discussions on the issue.

The county commission developed work groups to advise the county government on navigating the pandemic, and the initial focus was to ensure that all students could participate in remote learning. Now, forty government, education, business, health, and local and national foundations are collaborating to improve digital access in the Palm Beach County area. The project addresses all three aspects of the digital divide - connectivity, skills & support, and devices.

Researchers at the University of South Florida (USF) partnered with the Florida Center for Cybersecurity to conduct a nationwide survey measuring the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has on people's online behaviors and digital reliance. The researchers surveyed 1,003 U.S. adults and found six topline results:

- COVID-19 has led to an increase in online shopping for most Americans, and a majority say they will continue shopping this way even when the pandemic is over.
Bringing Digital Equity Home: The Suncoast Digital Access for All Initiative, a Crucible of Practice Salon
By John Ferguson, TPF Fellow 2020/21

No matter the circumstances, The Patterson Foundation (TPF) enters each day focused on five constants that power its ability to thrive in the face of change while harnessing that change to work in new, impactful ways. This is achieved through five key actions: Caring → Connecting → Collaborating → Contributing → Creating. These five constants each inform TPF’s approach to creating community-driven change while remaining grounded in the principles of More than Money Philanthropy.

TPF’s initiatives have emphasized embracing technology and optimizing its benefits to strengthen its work. When the coronavirus pandemic hit in spring 2020, The Patterson Foundation paused for a moment to understand how individuals, organizations, and communities were moving through the three distinct phases of disaster recovery: cope, adapt, and innovate. Digital access emerged as a basic necessity to connect to various services that have increasingly shifted to an online environment. These include services related to education, health, employment, and other vital needs. Unfortunately, many ALICE (asset-limited, income-constrained, employed) families, older adults, and communities struggle to acquire internet access, computer devices, and training to succeed in this new, technology-driven world.

In June 2020, The Patterson Foundation created Digital Access for All to explore the efforts of multiple sectors working together to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being.

Please join us on July 28, from 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET, to learn how More than Money Philanthropy guided The Patterson Foundation’s Digital Access for All (DA4A) initiative from concept to community collaboration within the span of one year. Hear from the DA4A team and community partners how digital access is being addressed throughout the Suncoast region of Florida and beyond.

Do you have a resource or idea to share with the community? Is there a national, regional, or local effort you’d like us to know about or feature in future publications? Contact DA4A at digitalaccess@thepattersonfoundation.org to be considered.