

Streaming healthy cooking lessons to Kansas cancer patients

For most, a cancer diagnosis signals big changes ahead. Cancer treatment often causes changes in taste preferences and can cause other obstacles to eating such as mouth sores, dry mouth and swollen glands. Learning to cook nutritious, easily-tolerated meals can be difficult for patients who are already drained from chemotherapy. [Midwest Cancer Alliance](#) (MCA), the outreach network of the University of Kansas Cancer Center, has developed a program called Kitchen Therapy to provide healthy cooking options for patients and loved ones with cancer and other chronic diseases.

Once a month, registered dietitians Leigh Wagner, Ph.D., M.S., RDN, and Randy Evans, M.S., R.D., L.D., teach free, one-hour cooking lessons for easy, nutritious meals. Cancer patients and their families are the primary target audience for Kitchen Therapy, but the telehealth demonstrations are also helpful for people with other chronic conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension.

According to MCA Executive Communications Manager Ashley Spaulding, M.A., and MCA Outreach Director Brooke Groneman, MSM, telehealth fits well with the mission of MCA to bring cancer care closer to patients. Kitchen Therapy is broadcast from KU Clinical Research Center's industrial kitchen. With technology supported by KU Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth, any MCA member organization has the option to stream Kitchen Therapy video live. When a member site connects virtually, they cook their own food onsite so attendees can taste and smell the meals. Patients or families can also follow along with cooking demonstrations in their own kitchen using video conference technology.

Spaulding and Groneman said Kitchen Therapy is more than just a cooking demonstration - participants appreciate the opportunity to connect with other people affected by cancer or other chronic diseases.

"The social networks we were not expecting," said Groneman of how eager attendees are to build support networks with each other, adding that participants often arrive an hour early to visit with new friends made through the class.

Amy Barrett, who has attended Kitchen Therapy classes at the KU Clinical Research Center, wrote, "This is truly one of the very biggest highlights of my month!"

Streaming Kitchen Therapy to distant sites has required dietitians to adjust their lessons slightly, such as repeating audience questions and mentioning alternatives for ingredients that may not be available in smaller grocery stores. Still, dietitians have adapted well, and attendance has boomed.

Kitchen Therapy is also reaching patients through videos on social media. For Colon Cancer Awareness Month in March, KU Cancer Center broadcast special cooking lessons using Facebook Live video. Each Monday, a registered dietician prepared a colon-friendly dish with the help of a colon cancer specialist, who shared information about colon cancer while the food cooked. Recipes were displayed next to the video so that viewers could follow along easily. Spaulding and Groneman said they hope more MCA member organizations will connect in the future and more people will participate from home.

MORE ABOUT KITCHEN THERAPY

WATCH FACEBOOK COLON CANCER AWARENESS MONTH VIDEOS

[AFP Business of Telehealth Webinar](#)

March 30

Join the American Academy of Family Physicians and HTRC's Janine Gracy for a free webinar to discuss the benefits and barriers of telemedicine and treating patients with common conditions when and where they need it - through virtual care technologies. Participants will learn best practices for organizational assessment, including HTRC's eSTART tool, and look at the bottom line of telehealth and how to build a successful, financially sustainable program.

[ATA Annual Meeting](#)

April 29 - May 1

Chicago, Ill.

Join healthcare professionals and leaders from an array of healthcare and technology sectors at the American Telemedicine Association to learn, innovate and network. You will return to your organization with actionable insights, long-lasting connections, and an enhanced appreciation of telehealth-and how it transforms healthcare delivery. Be sure to visit the Telehealth Resource Center booth. You have until March 30 to take advantage of early-bird savings on registration!

ECHO schedule

| ECHO | WHEN | STATE |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Healthy Lifestyles Pediatric Obesity | Ongoing | Kansas |
| HELP it Might be Autism | Starts in April | Kansas |
| Opioid Addiction Treatment | Ongoing | Kansas |
| Child Behavioral Health | Ongoing | Kansas |
| Impact Asthma | Starts in May | Missouri |
| Autism | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Healthcare Ethics | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Chronic Pain Management | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Dermatology | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Hep C | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Child Psych | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Community Health Worker | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Opioid Use Disorder | Ongoing | Missouri |
| Addiction Medicine | Ongoing | Oklahoma |
| Obesity Medicine | Ongoing | Oklahoma |
| HIV/Viral Disorders | Ongoing | Oklahoma |
| Pediatric Psychiatry | Ongoing | Oklahoma |
| Psychiatry | Ongoing | Oklahoma |

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REGIONAL NEWS

Telehealth bills to watch in Kansas & Missouri

The Center for Connected Health Policy recently released a [legislative and regulatory update](#) detailing several bills working their way through the Missouri and Kansas congressional bodies. No new information was reported for Oklahoma. The table below summarizes the action.

| Bill # | Recent Action | Telehealth Implications |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Kansas | | |
| HB 2674 | 3/1/18: Sent to Senate Committee on Public Health & Welfare 3/19/18: Senate hearing | Establishes the Kansas Telemedicine Act which allows the patient-provider relationship to be established via telehealth and would, in effect, create coverage parity by private payers. |
| SB 300 | 2/15/18: Senate Committee on Ways and Means recommended bill pass as amended | Allows the Department of Health and Environment to make changes in how state Medicaid services are provided by implementing behavioral telehealth policy. |
| Missouri | | |
| HB 1502 | 3/7/18: Public hearing completed by House Professional Registration and Licensing | Changes provisions for advanced practice registered nurses related to telehealth. |
| HB 1617 | 3/7/18: Public hearing completed by Senate General Laws | After passing the House, HB 1617 has moved on to the Senate. For more information see HTRC article from January . |
| HB 1685 | 3/13/18: Senate public hearing held | Changes the law relating to short-term medical policies sold in Missouri and impacts telehealth coverage. |
| HB 1872 | 3/15/18: Reported to Senate and first read | Establishes the Missouri Rural Broadband Development Fund to expand access to broadband internet services in unserved and under-served areas; priority for areas facilitating telemedicine and electronic health records. |
| HB 2105 | 2/27/18: Reported Do Pass in House | Creates the Improved Access to Treatment for Opioid Addictions Program, which will provide patients and providers with access to knowledge and expertise through telemedicine and ECHO programs. |
| SB 1100 | 3/1/18: Introduced | Allows licensed optometrists and physicians to write prescriptions based on eye examinations delivered via telehealth. |

**Chart adapted from Center for Health Policy Heartland Legislative/Regulatory Report February-March 2018 Update*

Project ECHO

Project ECHO is a program using telehealth to revolutionize medical education and improve access to specialty care. Project ECHO, which was developed by the University of New Mexico School of Medicine, works by connecting primary care clinicians with specialist teams via videoconference.

Each specialty area has its own ECHO, such as autism or chronic pain. ECHO teams meet regularly to collaborate with primary care providers.

[Learn more](#)