



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH

NOTICE OF DIRECT AWARD

STATE OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

TELEHEALTH SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER

**POSTING DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015
INQUIRY CLOSING DATE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2015**

**ROMERO M. STOKES, GRANT MANAGER
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
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DIRECT AWARD JUSTIFICATION

TELEHEALTH SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER GRANT

AGENCY BACKGROUND	<p>The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) was created in 1999 by Senate Bill 241 and has the responsibility for insuring over two million people in the State of Georgia, maximizing the State's health care purchasing power, coordinating health planning for State agencies and proposing cost-effective solutions for reducing the number of uninsured. Within DCH, the State Office of Rural Health (SORH) serves Georgians by improving access to health care in rural and underserved areas to improve health status and reduce health disparities.</p>
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	<p>In partnership with the Georgia Partnership for Telehealth (GPT), this grant supports the expansion of access to quality health care services to students in Georgia's rural communities through the development of school-based telehealth centers (SBTCs).</p> <p>A recent study by the University of Georgia states that Georgians rank near the bottom nationally in terms of overall health. Healthcare Georgia Foundation reports that thirty-seven percent of children in Georgia are overweight or obese, twenty-two percent suffer from Asthma problems, and almost thirty percent have suffered from issues related to emotional health during the past year. Many of these students living in Georgia's rural communities do not receive timely, appropriate care due to the lack of local providers and access to other health care resources. The GPT School-Based Health Center Initiative addresses this issue through the development of school-based telehealth centers in school districts in some of the most medically underserved counties in Georgia. Integration of telehealth services into local school districts increases the availability of primary and specialized health care services for children who may not otherwise be able to seek care outside of school.</p> <p>Research has shown that school-based health centers represent cost-effective investments of public resources and provide an effective model of quality health care delivery that essentially eliminates all barriers to care for students in rural and underserved communities. Benefits of school-based health centers include: reduced inappropriate emergency room usage and hospitalization; reduction in Medicaid expenditures; increased utilization of health care services by students (primary care, behavioral health, dental, nutrition counseling, etc); decreased school absenteeism and tardiness; increased grade point averages; and increased likelihood of at-risk students remaining in school.</p> <p>The outcome of this grant project will be the development of at least six operational school-based telehealth centers in rural communities in Georgia.</p>
AWARD JUSTIFICATION	<p>Georgia Partnership for Telehealth (GPT), Inc. is a 501c3 charitable nonprofit corporation which was formed to promote improvements in healthcare and healthcare facilities in rural and underserved communities throughout the state of Georgia by assisting in the establishment of telemedicine programs. GPT's mission is to: 1) improve and promote the availability and provision of specialized healthcare services in rural and underserved parts of Georgia; 2) educate and provide training and technical assistance to hospitals, clinics, and primary care providers to implement and achieve exchange of health information; and 3) reduce the service barriers that exist for patients who live in rural parts of Georgia at a distance from hospitals and other medical facilities. GPT is Georgia's only non-profit state-wide telehealth network, houses the federally designated Southeastern TeleHealth Resource Center (SETRC) and charged with promoting the expansion and implementation of telehealth in Georgia.</p>
AWARD(S)	TOTAL DIRECT AWARD FUNDS AVAILABLE: \$200,000.00

TO SUBMIT INQUIRIES TO THIS DIRECT AWARD NOTIFICATION

Romero M. Stokes, Grant Manager at rstokes@dch.ga.gov no later than 2:00 PM on Monday, February 23, 2015