

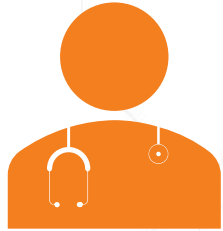


# ata2024

## NEXUS

**The Next Chapter in Clinical Support for Virtual Care:  
The Telehealth Central Support Team (TCS)**

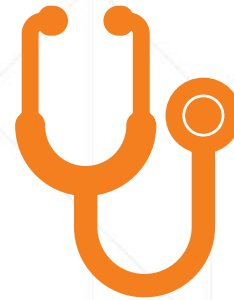
# Quick Introductions



## **Bryna Rickett, MSN, RN, CPN**

Telehealth Nurse Manager of Clinical  
Development and Implementation

Nurse Manager of Telehealth Central Support  
Team from 2020-2023



## **Cortney Belton, MBA, BSN, RN**

Nurse Manager of Telehealth Central Support  
and Virtual Specialty

# Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)

- Patient care is provided at 16 hospitals (includes owned or governing interest)
- Approximately 2,700 beds and four additional hospital locations in development
- Nearly 750 care locations situated in all regions of South Carolina.

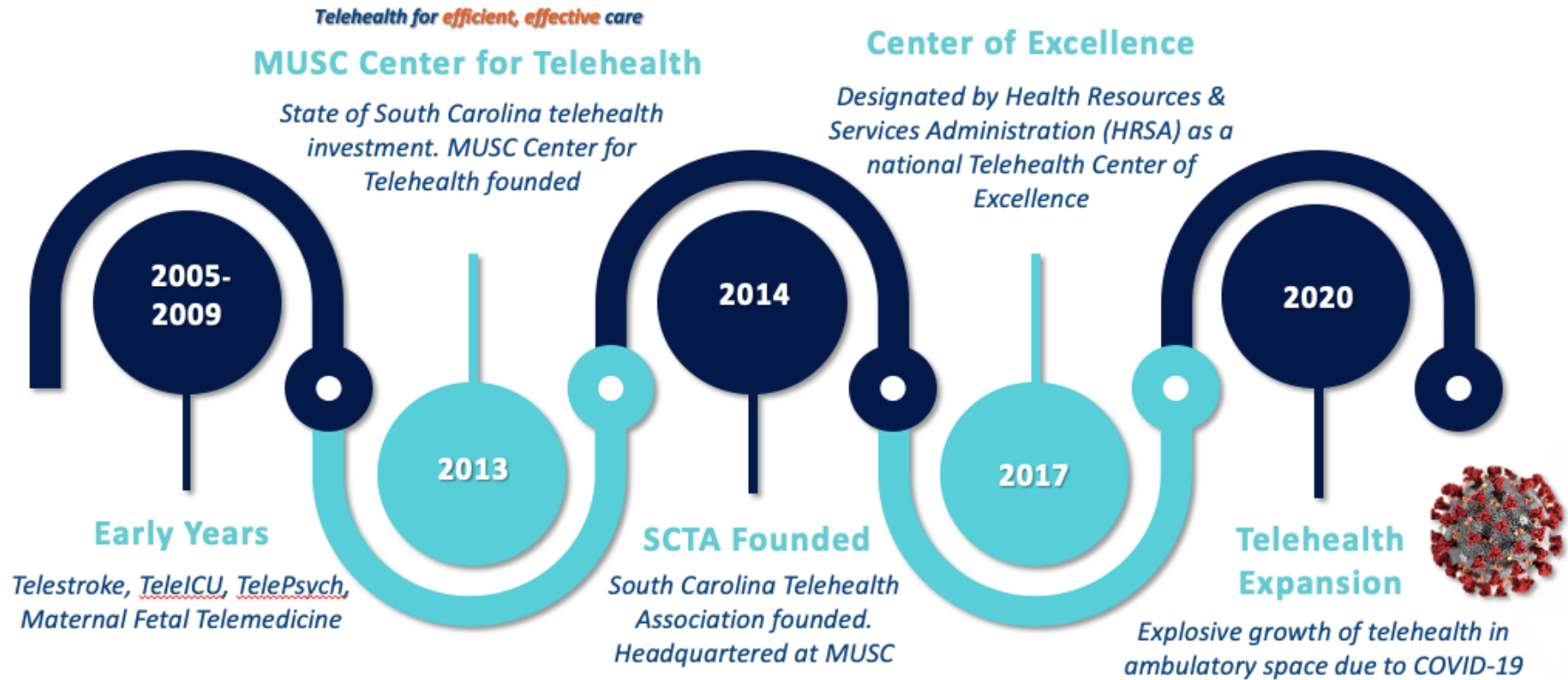
## Center for Telehealth at MUSC

- The Center for Telehealth has over 15 years of experience providing telehealth, offering over 100 unique telehealth services to over 280 sites across South Carolina.
- Care settings include over 45 hospitals, over 90 schools, and over 100 community clinics and other facilities.



In 2023, for the ninth consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report named MUSC Health University Medical Center in Charleston the Number 1 hospital in South Carolina.

## Our History



# Road map to TCS

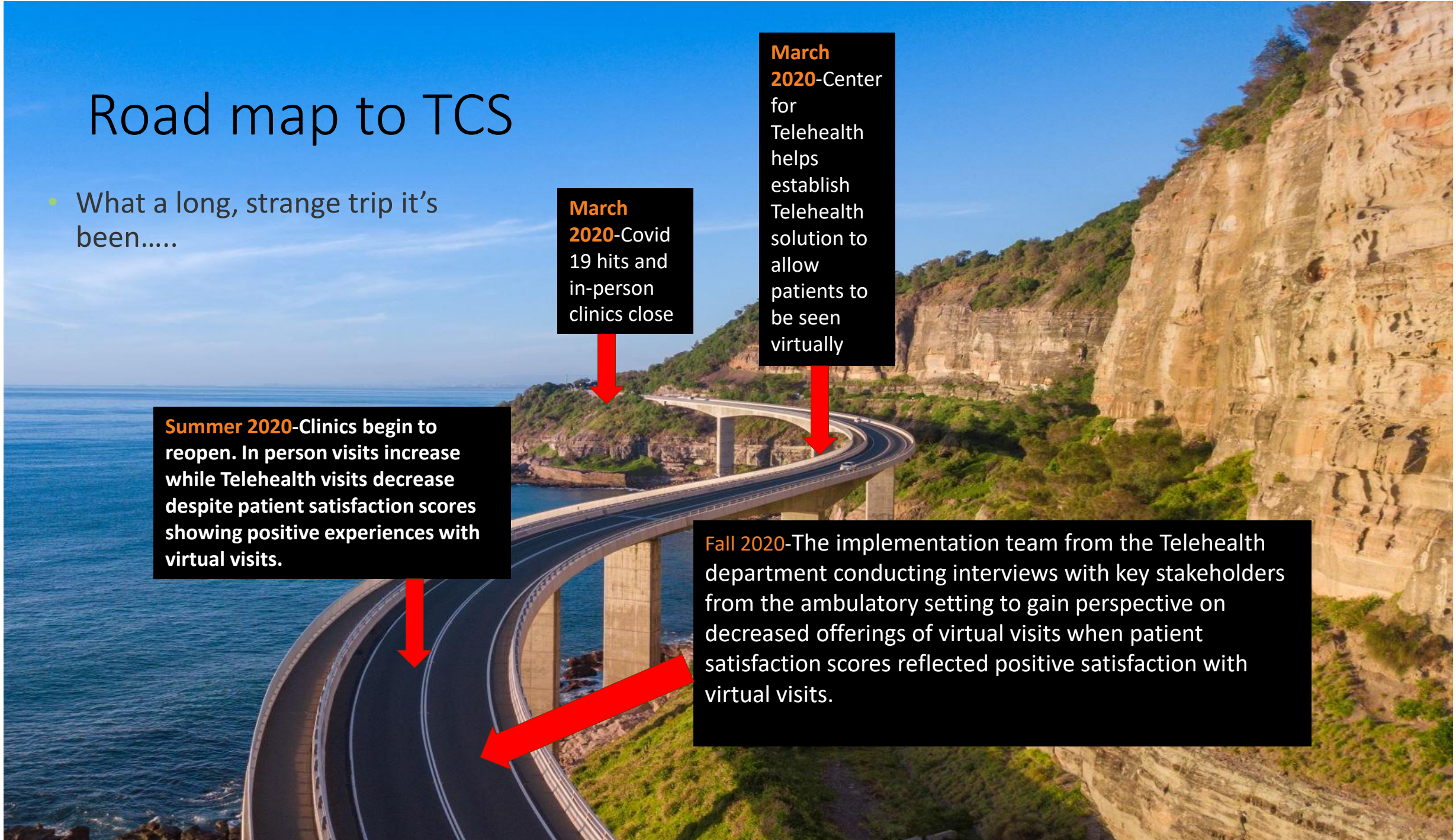
- What a long, strange trip it's been.....

**March 2020**-Covid 19 hits and in-person clinics close

**March 2020**-Center for Telehealth helps establish Telehealth solution to allow patients to be seen virtually

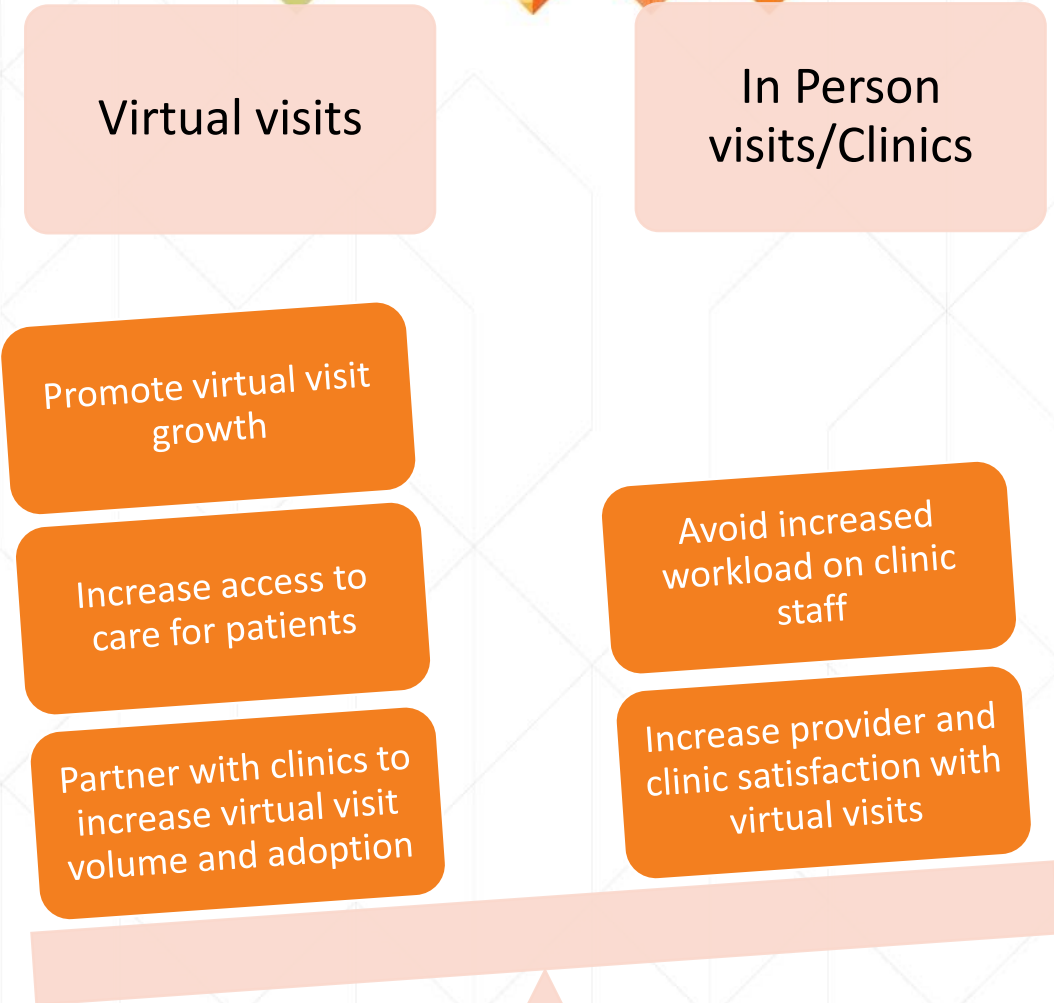
**Summer 2020**-Clinics begin to reopen. In person visits increase while Telehealth visits decrease despite patient satisfaction scores showing positive experiences with virtual visits.

**Fall 2020**-The implementation team from the Telehealth department conducting interviews with key stakeholders from the ambulatory setting to gain perspective on decreased offerings of virtual visits when patient satisfaction scores reflected positive satisfaction with virtual visits.



## What did we find:

- An overwhelming number of ambulatory providers and staff verbalized the lack of standardization and clinical support with the virtual visits
- Clinic Care Team members verbalized staffing shortages and inability to room both in person patients as well as virtual patients simultaneously
- Providers felt pressured to see in person patients and felt frustrated if virtual patients were not roomed in time and did not join visit on time
- Clinics felt the need for more support with virtual visits due to the novelty of these types of visits



## Telehealth Central Support (TCS)

- Completely remote Clinical Care Team employed by The Center for Telehealth
- Developed as part of a strategy to mature the support infrastructure for the continued large-scale use of outpatient virtual care.
- The primary goal of the TCS team is to ensure the success of patients and clinicians using telehealth for outpatient visits and to serve as a virtual clinical support to the provider.



## Insert: Telehealth Central Support (TCS)

- Merged the qualitative data from the focus groups, reviewed data, and program documents and developed description of TCS staff roles, staffing ratios, and inter- and intra-team communication.
- October 2020: the Telehealth Central Support (TCS) team was established with one nurse virtually supporting around 35 virtual visits per day in 3 clinics.
- TCS nurse followed standardized workflow that focused on virtual visit patient intake, technology support, and provider support to decrease the number of canceled or converted to in person visits.
- This approach took the workload of virtual visits off the clinic team and allowed for both in-person visits and virtual visits to be conducted successfully while building partnerships with ambulatory leaders



# Telehealth Central Support (TCS)

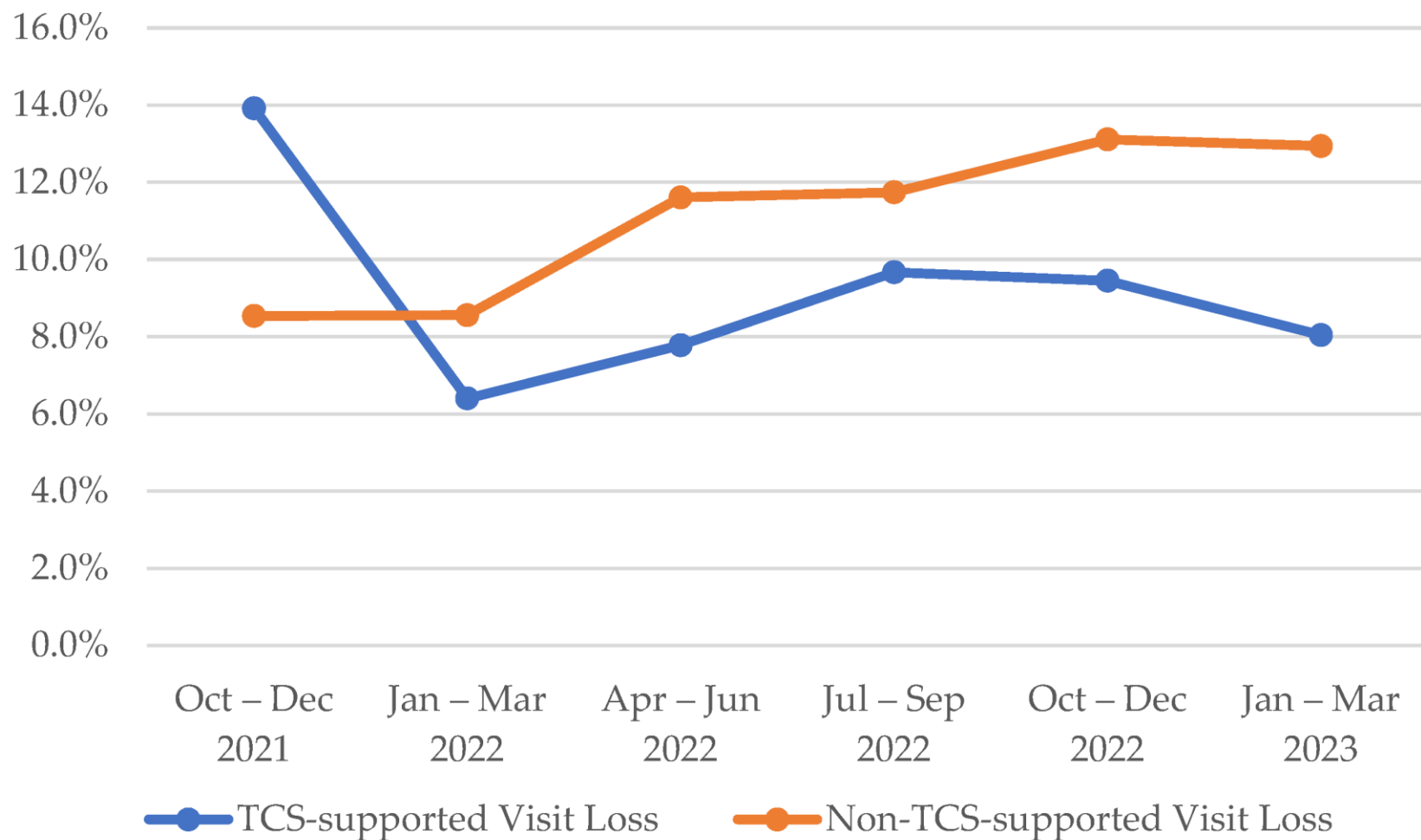
## Team workflow:



# Telehealth Central Support: First 18 months post implementation

- 18 months post launch of TCS:
  - Team expanded to include 14 CMAs
  - Over **75,000** visits were completed with support from the TCS team
  - TCS supported over **1,500 providers** serving over **46,000 unique patients**.
  - Each CMA supported between **30–40 visits per day** and with an average daily census of **500 virtual patient visits**.

## Virtual Visit Loss Rates TCS-supported vs. Non-supported Visits



## Current State 2024



- In the last 12 months:
  - Over **146,500 visits** were completed with the support of the TCS team
  - TCS supported nearly **1,600 providers** serving over **76,000 unique patients**.
- Provider feedback indicates that TCS support enhances efficiency and improves the quality of patient care during virtual visits.
- Current staffing model: TCS team is divided into internal teams with focuses on specific departments so that the volume is kept equitable, and the team can support the individual needs of specialties.

## Conclusion

- The TCS team was successfully deployed over a large part of the clinical enterprise and has been well received across the health system.
- It has proven to be a scalable model to support enterprise-level virtual health care delivery.
- While further research is needed to evaluate the long-term program outcomes, the results of its early implementation suggest great promise for improved telehealth patient and provider satisfaction, the more equitable delivery of virtual services, and more cost-effective means for supporting virtual care.
- TCS Team Members: Kelly Ward, Brooke Bridgewater, Ashley O'Connor, Lindsay Randolph, Natosha Holstein, Bettianne Link, Kenneth Bates, Lynn Traub, Heather McLean, Allison Prentice, Kayla White, Jackie Harris, Jamila Wade, and Erron McCormack.

# References and Special Thanks

- **Special thank you:**

- MUSC Center for Telehealth
- Renee Barber (original TCS member)
- TCS

- **References**

- McElligott J, Kruis R, Wells E, Gardella P, Rickett B, Ross J, Warr E, Harvey J. *Establishing a Centralized Virtual Visit Support Team: Early Insights*. Healthcare (Basel). 2023 Aug 8;11(16):2230. doi: 10.3390/healthcare11162230. PMID: 37628428; PMCID: PMC10454091.
- “Medical University of South Carolina”, [web.musc.edu](http://web.musc.edu), accessed 4/20/24
- South Carolina Telehealth Alliance, SCTA, 5/1/24



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**Thank you!**