

## BACKGROUND

- Rural hospitals often face challenges such as limited access to specialists leading to avoidable transfers and financial constraints.
- For critically ill patients, these factors lead to:
  - Delays in care
  - Worsened outcomes
  - Increased strain on families

**Although Tele-ICU's have been in use for over two decades, there is paucity of data on its utilization and benefits for small, rural hospitals, especially in the South.**

## AIM

**Implement Tele-critical care pilot (TCCP) program at two rural hospitals in Mississippi to address disparity in access to critical care services.**

**Use consultative models with mobile carts to connect bedside providers with critical care specialists.**

**This allows intensivists to support non-critical care physicians and advanced practice providers, improving patient care.**

## METHODS AND RESULTS

### Tele-critical Care Program



#### Local Hospital

- 24/7 access to critical care providers
- Need to prevent unnecessary transfers and improve clinical outcomes

#### Remote out of state providers

- ✓ Access to EMR
- ✓ Access to PACS
- ✓ 24/7 schedule

### Hospital 1: Critical Access Hospital

**227** critical care consults  
(Nov. 2023 – October 2024)

High acceptance by bedside providers and administrators

**\$278,821** direct financial impact, 6 mo.

### Hospital 2: Small rural hospital

**248** critical care consults  
(March 2023 – October 2024)

High acceptance by bedside providers and administrators.

Many patients remained at local facility, increasing reimbursement capture.

## DISCUSSION

Implementing a TCCP in rural Hospitals has the potential to significantly enhance the ability of local healthcare providers to deliver high-quality care to their patients.

By enabling real-time expert support, the program can reduce unnecessary transfers, optimize care delivery, and improve clinical outcomes for patients in rural and underserved areas.

TCCP has the potential to serve as a cost-effective model for extending the reach of specialized care to rural populations.