

Fact Sheet

Arkansas e-Link led an initiative to help make broadband services available throughout Arkansas. This broadband expansion will help provide greater accessibility to telemedicine and education programs, especially to those in rural areas. Ultimately, increased broadband services helps communities grow and allows the state of Arkansas to remain competitive in the global economy.

About the Project

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) was awarded \$102 million by the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) within the Department of Commerce to support a statewide \$128-million broadband infrastructure to serve community institutions across Arkansas. As recipient of this award, Arkansas e-Link has successfully completed the expansion, integration, and enhanced the capabilities of two major existing community-serving networks: the *Arkansas Telehealth Network* as overseen by Arkansas Telehealth Oversight & Management (ATOM) and the *Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON)*. Every county in Arkansas is now benefiting from this partnership of healthcare, higher education, public safety, and research organizations united in their needs for improved bandwidth and broadband-enabled equipment to better serve their communities.

Increased bandwidth and/or new equipment is supporting the platform for new and enhanced community services at 450+ statewide locations. As a product of this grant-funded initiative, the state's healthcare consumers, medical providers and researchers has increased accessibility to real-time clinical consultations with remote specialists, virtual research collaboration and distance & continuing education. The state's publicly supported community college students are now able to enroll in distance education courses in collaboration with the state's four-year universities, use fiber-grade Internet connections at computers on public college or university campuses, take or teach online courses and join in research or studies with other students and teachers across the state. Arkansas e-Link unifies a diverse group of community institutions to significantly improve the state's broadband-enabled services.



Overall Project Completion: 100%

State-of-the-Project

Arkansas e-Link has completed its deployment strategy phase, outreach, and other activities which has resulted in:

- Deployment of 530 interactive video units and 290 public access personal computers.
- Installation of 641 clinical assessment tools at healthcare sites.
- Leasing of broadband circuits at 420 sites.
- Full implementation of video infrastructure systems.
- Telehealth training to all community anchor institutions (by South Central Telehealth Learning Center).
- Presentations at seven (7) regional seminars targeting community/civic leaders, business leaders, educators, physicians and staff, hospital administrators and other healthcare providers about the benefits of video technology.
- BTOP overview/update and testimony to the Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee of the Arkansas Legislature.
- Broadband at telemedicine sites funded through June 2016.
- Outreach contact with 1,479+ Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) staff.
- Implementation of self-scheduling software.
- Continued development of sustainability initiatives for post-grant.
- Participation in an evaluation study of the social and economic impact of BTOP initiated by the NTIA.



ARE-ON, the program's sub-recipient, reports these project accomplishments:

- Placement of 16 new network huts
- Completion of:
 - 49 miles fiber constructed
 - 715.89 miles leased
 - optical network equipment installation and tuning
 - backbone routers installation and turn-up
- All fiber routes now carrying production traffic
- Links to all community college networks are lit and backbone infrastructure is in place
- Final cut-over of fiber-connected community college local area networks to ARE-ON network links has begun.

Key partner organizations:

Arkansas Association of Public Universities
Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges
Arkansas Center for Health Improvement
Arkansas Children's Hospital
Arkansas Department of Health
Arkansas Department of Human Services
Arkansas Department of Information Systems
Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care
Arkansas Telehealth Oversight & Management (ATOM)
Arkansas Hospital Association
Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON)
Arkansas State Library
Baptist Health
Community Health Centers of Arkansas
Connect Arkansas
Delta Regional Authority
HomeCare Association of Arkansas
Mental Health Council of Arkansas
Methodist Family Health
Metropolitan Emergency Medical System
Pathfinder, Inc.
St. Vincent Health System
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

All 450+ sites are functioning on an “integrated network” fusing the Arkansas Telehealth Network as overseen by ATOM and the ARE-ON, benefiting from the following BTOP deliverables:

- Substantial bandwidth upgrades
- Significant network expansion
- Interactive video equipment additions
- Public computers for internet access

Now that the grant funding has ended, these deliverables will provide the tools needed to enable participation in activities that once were available only in certain areas of Arkansas.



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For more information, to view map of participating community anchor institutions, and/or request promotional materials such as a Microsoft PowerPoint slideshow, please visit our web site: www.arkansaselink.com

Disclaimer: This fact sheet is intended as general information only and does not carry the force of legal opinion. The UAMS Center for Distance Health is providing this information as a public service. This information and related materials are presented to give the public access to information about the grant award known as the BTOP project. You should be aware that while we try to keep the information timely and accurate, there will often be a delay between official publications of the materials and the modification of these pages. Therefore, we make no express or implied guarantees. We will make every effort to keep this information current and to correct errors brought to our attention.