

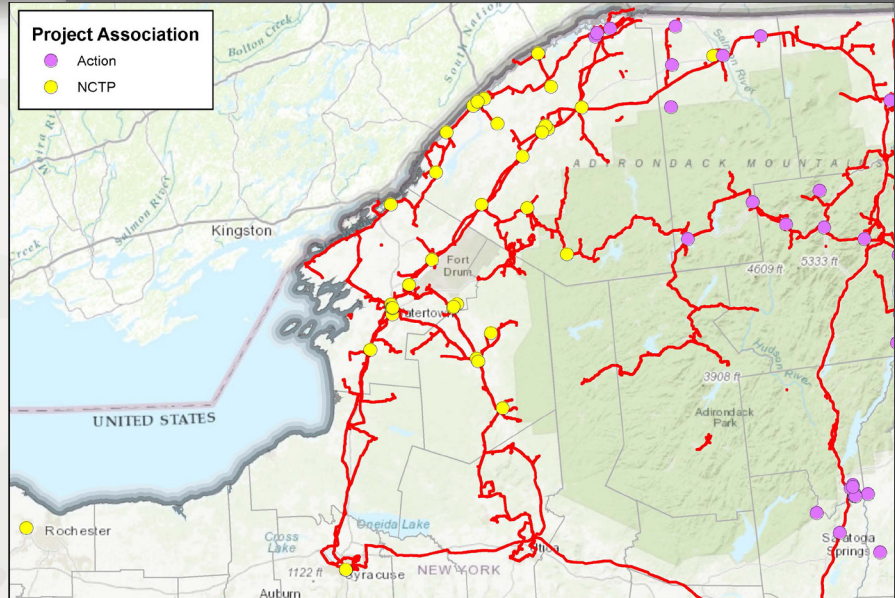
# Telemedicine & Fiber Network

Of all our project areas, perhaps the fastest growing is our regional telemedicine initiative.

Work began in early 2009, when FDRHPO created the **North Country Telemedicine Project (NCTP)**, an extensive fiber-optic network that connected more than 25 healthcare facilities in Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Onondaga, and St. Lawrence counties, including Fort Drum's Guthrie Ambulatory Health Care Clinic. This network expanded in 2011, when FDRHPO partnered with the **Adirondack-Champlain Telemedicine Information Network (ACTION)** to create a second network encompassing sites in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Warren, and Washington counties, and Chittenden County in Vermont.

Initial funding for these programs came from the Federal Communication Commission's "Rural Health Care Pilot Program" and the NYS Department of Health's "HEAL 21" grant. Today, FDRHPO's telemedicine program remains funded by the Department of Health, as one of its Rural Health Development Programs.

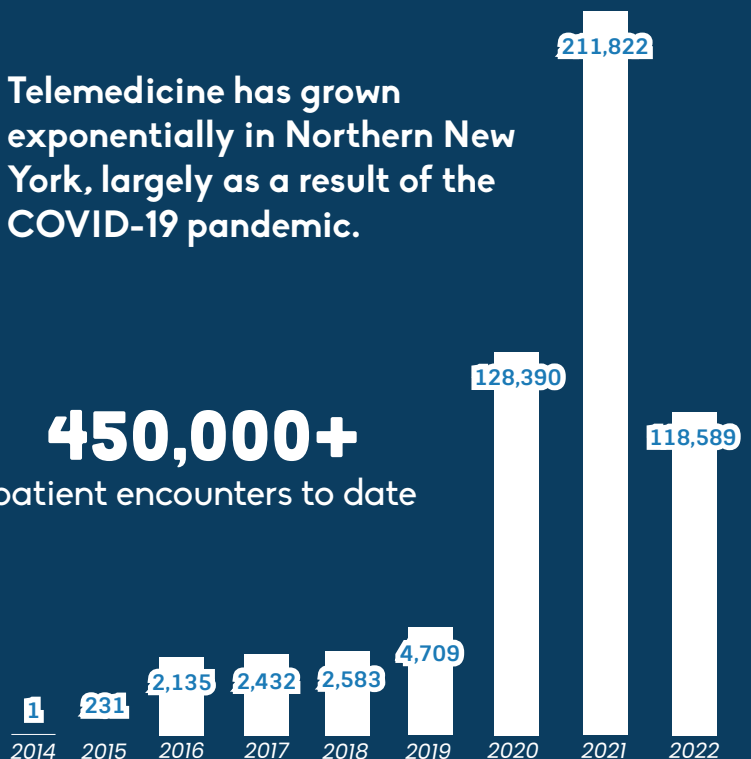
In 2015, FDRHPO began a collaboration with Adirondack Health Institute (AHI) to form the **North Country Telehealth Partnership** — a unified effort to plan and implement telemedicine throughout a 12-county catchment area, covering northern and central New York. This collaborative quickly has become Northern New York's leading agency focused on increasing access to healthcare through the innovative use of telehealth and telemedicine technology.



**Our telemedicine and fiber-optic network spans 12 counties across northern and central New York.**

**Telemedicine has grown exponentially in Northern New York, largely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**450,000+**  
patient encounters to date



## Our Telemedicine Projects

Using technology and resources made available by the North Country Telehealth Partnership, providers throughout Northern New York have applied telemedicine across the healthcare spectrum. Clinical applications range from dermatology to psychiatry, and innovations are constantly being made to expand the reach of telemedicine.

**At our partner locations throughout the North Country, telemedicine is currently being used for:**



### Child, Adolescent & Adult Telepsychiatry/ Telepsychology

In our region, we have a tremendous need for psychiatric services — especially for children. Telemedicine increases access to care for these patients by removing the barriers of distance and transportation.

### Telestroke

Time is of the essence when caring for patients experiencing stroke symptoms. Telemedicine allows for fast access to care from Central New York's Comprehensive Stroke Center at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, giving our rural hospitals and patients the very best in stroke care.



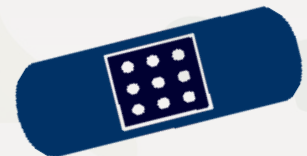
### Remote Patient Monitoring

Patients answer health-related questions on a tablet, computer or smart phone, which are monitored daily for red flags indicating a need for intervention.

This helps establish good self-monitoring routines and gain a deeper understanding of one's disease signs and symptoms.

### Diabetic TeleRetinopathy

Diabetic TeleRetinopathy is one of the more recent services added to our region. With portable retina cameras embedded in primary care offices, medical staff are able to capture a detailed image of a patient's retina and securely send it to a participating ophthalmologist or optometrist for assessment.



### TeleWoundCare

When it comes to healing chronic wounds, TeleWoundCare gives patients more access to a wound care specialist, more quickly than they normally would. This translates into faster healing times, enhanced quality of life for patients, and a lower cost of care. Many of our region's TeleWoundCare appointments involve Samaritan Medical Center's Wound Care Center in Watertown.

### Teleneurology

In addition to stroke care, telemedicine can be used to treat other neurological conditions like headaches, dementia, epilepsy, movement disorders, and multiple sclerosis.

## Our Partners

To keep our community informed and help answer their questions about telemedicine, we bring together key stakeholders from across the state for a bi-monthly videoconference. This group, called the **Telehealth Learning Collaborative**, includes more than 130 individuals from upwards of 90 organizations. They represent the following site types:

Hospitals

Health Centers

Telemedicine Associations

Public Health Agencies

Legislative/Political Bodies

Insurance Agencies

Independent Physicians

Educational Institutions

...and more!