Introduction
Telemedicine is an enabling technology, originally developed to enhance access to health care for rural and underserved populations. With the development of more technology and increasing experience, it has become evident that the goal of telemedicine is much broader. Telemedicine, including telepsychiatry is becoming more widespread, less costly, and may demonstrate greater efficiency, continuity, and timeliness in the provision of medical care. Increased used of the internet for medical care implies that the computerized patient record, patient access to vast amounts of medical information, and provider access to patients anywhere in the world through use of the internet, will likely modify the practice of psychiatry and the doctor-patient relationship as we have know it.

Definition
Telepsychiatry is the use of electronic communication and information technologies to provide or support clinical psychiatric care at a distance. The focus is on live, interactive two-way audio-video communication.

Applications
- **Scope:** Clinical applications encompass diagnostic, therapeutic, and forensic modalities across all ages.
- **Clinical Interview:** Telepsychiatry may be conducted between physicians in consultation, between health care team members, or between mental health providers and a patient.

Provider Reimbursement
Services provided through use of telehealth technology may be reimbursed at both the originating site and the distant site where the psychiatrist or other practitioner provides service.

VONM Telepsychiatry Pilot Projects
- **Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services (RMCH):** The successful pilot project funded through reinvestment has made child and adolescent psychiatry available in Gallup and McKinley County.
- **Presbyterian Medical Services (PMS):** PMS has developed telehealth capability in fifteen rural and frontier community health centers to increase access to behavioral health services.

Expansion Plans
VONM is currently work to expand telehealth capacity by assisting two providers within each region acquire telehealth technology and connect with qualified distant site providers.