

Telehealth and Internet Access Fact Sheet

Sumter County, AL



Background

Though fast, affordable, and reliable Internet access is becoming essential for education, work, and being an informed citizen, many families lack access. The digital divide impacts tens of millions of Americans, especially older, rural, low-income, Black, and Indigenous households. Millions of households do not have adequate infrastructure – wires or nearby wireless towers – for decent Internet access. Many millions more cannot afford access that is available or possess the skills and devices to make sure of it. A major impact is that many of these same households face significant health disparities, driven largely by social, environmental, and economic inequities. Telehealth programs allow people to talk with their doctors over video, have their vital signs checked remotely, access test results, and get more regular and individualized care all in their homes. Telehealth has been found to dramatically improve quality of life and significantly reduce the cost of healthcare for patients, hospitals, insurers, and providers.

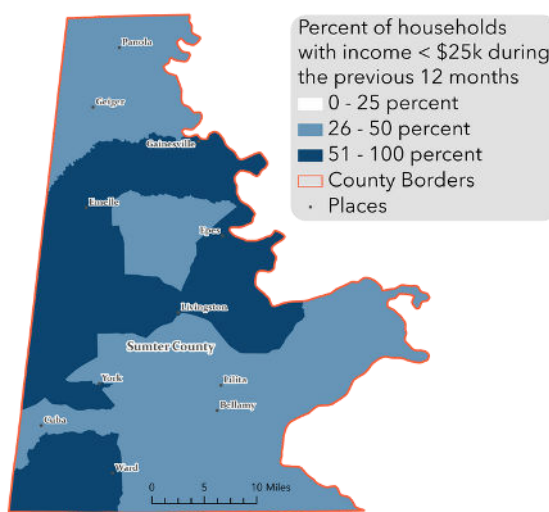
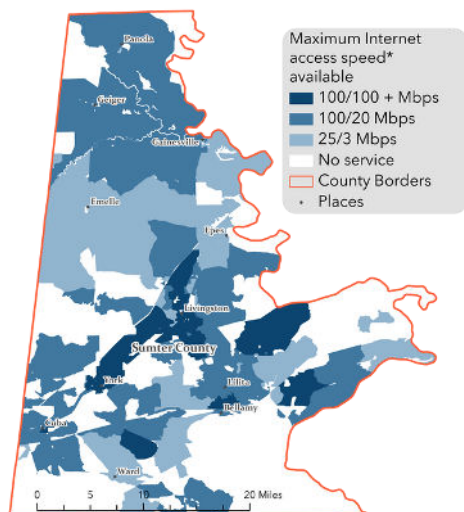
Solving both of these problems has the same solution: **build new broadband infrastructure to enable innovative telehealth programs, and pay for it using the savings that come from virtual care. This is especially true in places like Sumter County, Alabama.**

Broadband in Sumter Co.

28%
of households have less than 25/3 Mbps*

56%
of households have less than 100/20 Mbps*

63%
of households are ACP eligible**



*A 25/3 Megabits per second (Mbps) connection is the slowest definition of broadband by the Federal Communications Commission. A 100/20 Mbps connection, or more, is preferred. New networks usually support 1,000/1,000 Mbps connections

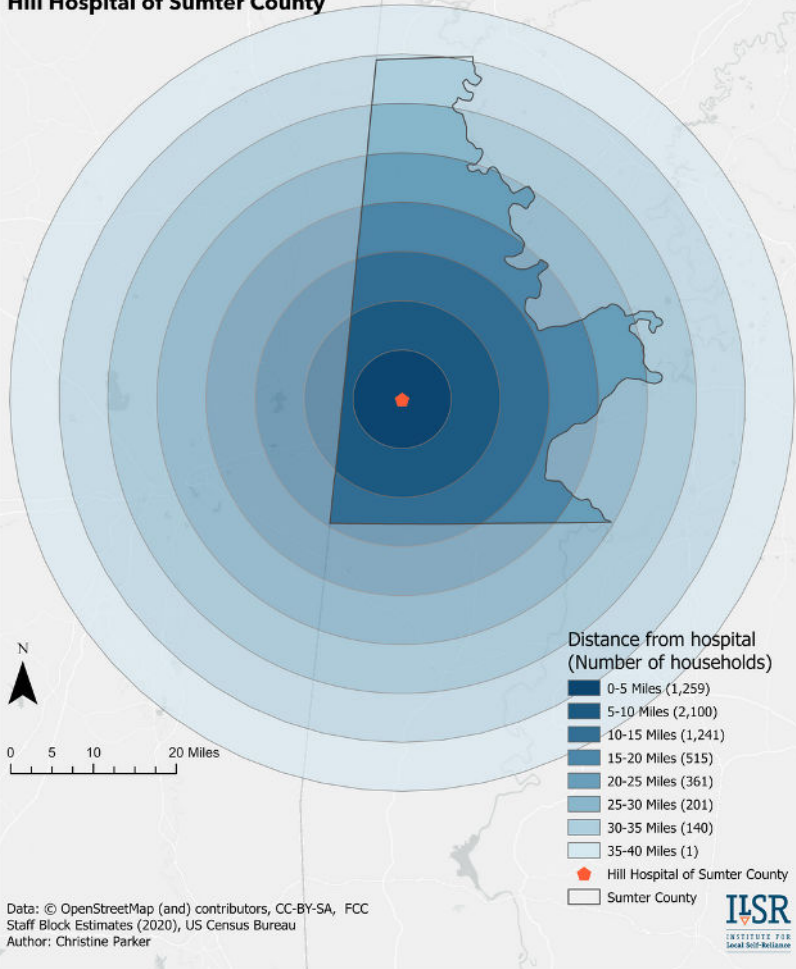
**The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is available to most low-income households, and provides \$30/month for a household Internet connection.

Broadband numbers based on FCC Form 477 (Dec 2020). ACP eligibility based on ACS 5-year estimates of household income (2015-2019).

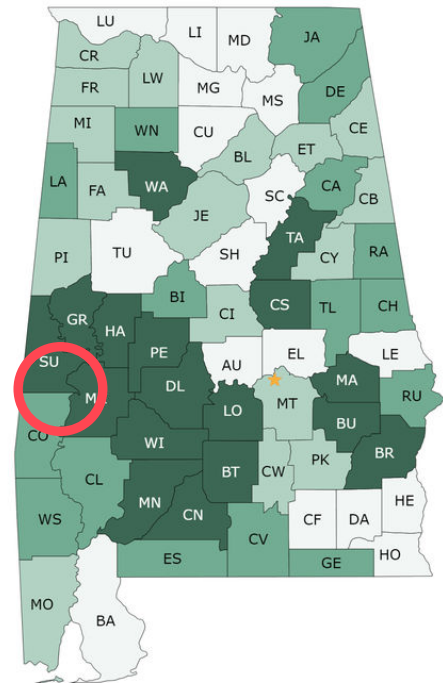
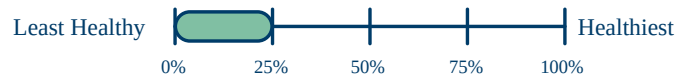
Health in Alabama & Sumter County

- Alabama has a high prevalence of **multiple chronic health conditions***
- The state ranks **47th** (out of 50) on overall health outcomes*
- Sumter County is ranked among Alabama's least-healthy counties**

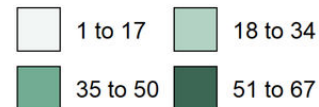
Approximate travel distance by households in Sumter County, AL to Hill Hospital of Sumter County



Sumter is ranked among the least healthy counties in Alabama (Lowest 0%-25%)



Health Outcome Ranks



Map and graphics from County Health Rankings

*America's Health Rankings: https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/annual/measure/Overall_a/state/AL

**County Health Rankings: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/alabama/2021/rankings/hale/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

