

## **Comments from USDA Rural Development Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Recipients**

**Deborah Alden , Superintendent of Schools, RSU #10  
Rumford, ME**

“We are so fortunate to be part of this incredible funding source to continue and expand access for our students and staff in our rural setting. This is a game changer as we work for equitable learning and wellness opportunities for all in our District and communities.”

**Brian Carrier, Director of Technology, RSU #10  
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“This grant will facilitate technology integration and enable participating school districts to share resources through video conferencing and distance learning hardware. This transformative technology empowers us to bridge educational gaps, extending mental health and educational opportunities seamlessly into the classroom environment. The USDA Rural Development DLT grant underscores our steadfast commitment to inclusivity, ensuring students of all economic backgrounds can partake in enriching experiences such as mental health services, distance learning opportunities, virtual field trips, and collaborative meetings.

“Thanks to this continued USDA Rural Development funding (we previously received a USDA DLT grant in 2019), RSU10 will continue to contribute to student development and the promotion of well-being throughout our rural community. By leveling the playing field and ensuring equal access to these innovative resources, we are not only broadening horizons but also fostering a supportive environment that positively impacts both students and staff. RSU10 takes pride in pioneering the use of technology to enhance education, fostering a more inclusive and connected learning experience for all.”

**Marguerite Corvini, EdD, MSW,  
Director, UNH Center for Digital Health Innovation:**

“We are excited to partner with libraries and youth and senior centers to increase access to innovative health technologies, and also to expose graduate and undergraduate health students to the needs of rural communities.

“Libraries and community youth and senior centers are at the heart of our rural communities. The launch of this program will increase access to innovative health technologies for people in rural areas, provide learning opportunities for our students, and build the capacity to provide more services over time.”

**LeighAnn Howard RN, DNP, CHFN  
Vice President of Clinical Excellence and Community Partnerships  
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice**

“For our patients living in remote areas of Maine, this USDA grant will help us continue to provide them easy access to care through telehealth technology. Using this equipment, we’re able to monitor their vitals, consult with them on their questions, and ensure they understand and are taking their prescriptions, all from the comfort of their own home. We know that it can be a struggle for many patients to travel one, two, even up to three hours for some of these services. This often turns into an entire day not only for the patient, but also for a family member or friend. This helps drastically cut down on those on those trips, and overall, has significantly increased the comfort and satisfaction of our patients.”