

# Network News



**EASTERN MONTANA TELEMEDICINE NETWORK**



## Green and Earth Friendly

Global warming, green, and carbon footprint are common buzz words used today with environmental awareness in the forefront of many minds. How does telemedicine impact the environment, conservation, and efficiency on a daily basis?

To determine the environmental impact of decreased travel, a busy day in the life of Eastern Montana Telemedicine Network was examined.

Sixteen separate clinical consults occurred over EMTN on February 12th. Services were provided by the following Billings Clinic staff: three psychiatrists, a nurse practitioner for the PRISM diabetic research program, a PA working in neurology, an infectious diseases physician and a neurologist. A Glendive dietician also provided a consult to Colstrip. Without telemedicine as an option, approximately 7018 miles would have been driven by patients for medical care.

February 12th Consults from	Mileage Cost per Round Trip	Total Miles for Trips	Total Mileage Cost for Trips	
<b>Billings Clinic to:</b>				
Glasgow	6	\$281.71	3348	\$1690.26
Glendive	3	\$224.22	1332	\$672.66
Great Falls	1	\$219.67	438	\$219.67
Livingston	1	\$117.16	232	\$117.16
Lewistown	1	\$126.25	250	\$126.25
Malta	1	\$211.09	418	\$211.09
Colstrip	1	\$124.23	246	\$124.23
Helena	1	\$224.22	444	\$224.22
<b>Colstrip to:</b>				
Glendive	1	\$156.55	310	\$156.55

An evening Chemical Dependency group was held at Eastern Montana Community Mental Health Center in Miles City. Attendees requiring this class would have logged 2136 miles on the highway to participate.

Round trip miles between patients and their providers number 9154 on this date. At the current Federal Mileage reimbursement rate of 50.5 cents per mile, telemedicine saved at least \$4,623.78 in costs.

EMS Live @ Nite! is offered via telemedicine from Spokane, Washington. In February, 38 attendees from across Montana participated in this continuing education class for emergency medicine workers. The round trip between the sites attending and

Spokane total 64,104 miles. It is unlikely that these participants would have traveled for the CEU class. However, by obtaining CEU's via videoconferencing, the attendees reduced their need to expend time and resources obtaining education in a more traditional manner.

## Grand Rounds Offers CME Units Weekly

The clock edges towards noon on Friday at the Billings Clinic conference rooms and like clockwork the staff at Eastern Montana Telemedicine Network is in production mode. Cameras, microphones, recording and videoconferencing equipment are poised to provide programming throughout the region. It is show time again for Grand Rounds on EMTN.

In affiliation with the University of Washington Medical School, Billings Clinic offers continuing medical education credits to providers in the region. Sites from Baker to Warm Springs and Scobey to Lovell connect via telemedicine to listen, view and participate in a weekly lecture focusing on a specific area of interest to medical providers.

Average weekly attendance numbers about 75 at the Billings Clinic main campus. There are another one to two dozen attendees by telemedicine. All those participating in person and by telemedicine have the opportunity to receive CME credits.

For over 15 years, Grand Rounds has been a place for learning, sharing ideas, and gathering with peers. Eastern Montana Telemedicine Network has carried the program to sites in the region for 6 years. Presenters with varied backgrounds include local medical specialists, attorneys, medical students, and visiting specialists. Presentations occur in person or from distant locations.

Recent topics include; Rheumatic Manifestations of Systemic Diseases, Health Care Policy and Equity, Thrombosis Prophylaxis and Treatment, Pediatric Bipolar Disorder, and A Telemedicine Clinic Case Study in Neurology. Upcoming topics are available on the Billings Clinic web site at [www.billingsclinic.org](http://www.billingsclinic.org).

Dr. Doug Carr, Medical Director of Education and System Initiatives and the Medical Advisor to Telemedicine, sees a perfect merging of his roles in weekly Grand Rounds. "If providers first recognize the value of telemedicine in CME they may feel more comfortable with the technology in providing care to their patients throughout the region."