

U.S. Rep. Kind: Helps secure close to \$1 million in funding for telehealth in rural areas

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Washington, DC -Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** announced that Gundersen Health System will receive almost \$1 million in funding through the second round of the FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program. This program was established as part of the [CARES Act](#) and additional funding was provided through the December 2020 COVID-19 relief package, which Rep. Kind [voted for](#). The grant will go towards laptops, telehealth carts, and other telemedicine monitoring technology to help the health system allocate care resources across its network of rural clinics and hospitals.

This announcement comes after Rep. Kind sent a [letter](#) calling on the FCC to prioritize rural areas in this latest round of COVID-19 Telehealth Program funding. In the letter, Rep. Kind emphasized the importance of closing the digital divide and the critical role telehealth plays in providing quality care for rural communities.

"Telehealth services have helped expand health care options and availability for rural communities across Wisconsin, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," said **Rep. Ron Kind**. "I'm glad to see this funding heading to Gundersen to help them continue to increase their telehealth capabilities and make sure all Wisconsinites can access quality care regardless of where they live."

"Gundersen has been a provider of telemedicine services for over 20 years. This FCC grant provides greater opportunity to be even more patient-centric by going directly to the patient in their home or at the bedside," said **Jessica Easterday, Clinical Manager, Gundersen Virtual Care**. "The COVID-19 pandemic caused us to quickly prioritize and expand our existing telemedicine and virtual care options."

We are pleased that we have built a solid infrastructure that allows for improved access to care for our patients in their homes in our rural communities and in our clinics and Critical Access Hospitals. Gundersen is grateful to Congressman Kind for his long-running support of telemedicine to serve patients and empower providers.”

Rep. Kind is the co-chair of the House Rural Health Care Coalition and serves on the Subcommittee on Health for the Ways and Means Committee, the most powerful – and the oldest – committee in the House of Representatives. It has jurisdiction over tax measures, the management of public debt, trade and tariff laws, Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and many other economic growth measures.