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THE NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REIMAGINE NEW YORK COMMISSION RELEASES NOTABLE FINDINGS FROM TELEHEALTH AND LIBRARIES SURVEY

ALBANY, NY – Today, the New York Library Association (NYLA) released findings from a recent survey of their membership in partnership with the Reimagine New York Commission on telehealth and libraries. In the beginning of November, NYLA encouraged members to share their perspective on introducing telehealth to their libraries and the impact it would make to their patrons.

With over 100 survey participants, **over 60% were interested in offering support for patrons to access telehealth and agreed their patrons would be interested in utilizing telehealth services.** Even more, **70% of participants** said providing telehealth would be consistent with their library's mission.

“New York’s libraries have always been the epicenter of their communities and the pandemic has only further proved this undeniable fact,” **said Claudia Depkin, NYLA Council President.** “By conducting this survey, in partnership with the Reimagine New York Commission, we have a clearer sense of the barriers our libraries face in introducing yet another critical resource - telehealth services - to their patrons.”

Other notable concerns from survey participants were the barriers to community members accessing telehealth in their libraries. **One of the largest barriers – with over 70% of reporting – was that New York State libraries lacked adequate space to provide a private and safe space for patrons to utilize these services.** This included lack of funding for additional private rooms, plexiglass barriers, or separate equipment, such as laptops, for telehealth appointments.

Also, although most libraries reported they had reliable internet connectivity, **over 40% reported that community members did not have enough awareness of telehealth services nor the digital literacy to utilize such services.**

“This survey has allowed us to gain a clearer sense of the realities our libraries are facing when it comes to providing telehealth services to their patrons,” **said Jeremy Johannesen, Executive Director of the New York Library Association (NYLA).** “NYLA is pleased to be able to engage in this partnership with the Reimagine New York Commission in a way that spotlights the vital, flexible and evolving role that libraries play in serving their communities.”

Full survey results are available [here](#).

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About New York Library Association (NYLA):

The New York Library Association (NYLA) is the voice of the library community in New York. NYLA is the oldest state library association in the country and represents school, college, special and public libraries, library staff, trustees, and students from around the state. NYLA is the only statewide organization.

About Reimagine New York Commission:

Created by Governor Andrew Cuomo and chaired by Eric Schmidt, former Google CEO and Executive Chairman and co-founder of Schmidt Futures, the State's 16-member Blue Ribbon Commission will leverage advanced technology tools to build back a better and more resilient New York with greater opportunity for all.

This Commission includes educators, innovators, labor organizers, business leaders, and artists from across the state to ensure the outcomes that we deliver reflect the diversity of the communities that we serve and are developed through continued engagement with the public.

The Commission will focus initially on recommendations to increase opportunity in three essential ways: reducing the digital divide, improving access to healthcare, and creating more and better employment in an increasingly digital economy. In each one of these areas, we will count on New Yorkers to share ideas and to propose new solutions.

