



## 2016 Year End Newsletter

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**Wishing everyone a Happy New Year!**

*The Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center*

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### Pohnpei Telemedicine Room Launch



On December 15, 2016, the [Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center \(PBTRC\)](#) participated in a video teleconference ceremony to launch the opening of the Pohnpei Telemedicine Room in the Pohnpei Hospital. The ceremony was attended by the Pohnpei State Governor, the Chairman of Health, Senators, and the Director of Pohnpei State Hospital, among other dignitaries. Dr. Perman, who attended the [2016 USAPI Telehealth Champion Building and Planning Workshop](#), led the efforts to quickly establish telecommunication links, the designated room, and funding to support the initiative. With the opening of the Telemedicine Room, they will embark on their first two consultations with Shriners Hospital for Children in Honolulu. Dr. Craig Ono from Shriners Hospital for Children in Honolulu will see two of his former patients in Pohnpei by video teleconferencing.

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## ECHO Act Signed Into Law



Photo (L-R): Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI); Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT)

Photo Credit: <https://twitter.com/SenBrianSchatz/status/806966405488742400>

Introduced by Hawaii's own Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) as well as Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), the Expanding Capacity for Health Outcomes (ECHO) Act was signed into law by President Obama on December 14, 2016. This bipartisan bill aims to increase access to high quality healthcare and health education in rural or underserved areas.

For more information please visit: <http://www.pbtrc.org/echo-act-signed-law/>

Senator Schatz's Press Release: <http://www.schatz.senate.gov/press-releases/president-obama-signs-schatz-hatch-tele-training-bill-into-law>

For the full text of the Act please visit:  
<https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/s2873/BILLS-114s2873enr.pdf>

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## 21st Century Cures Act Includes Telehealth



Photo Credit: <https://twitter.com/POTUS/status/808807755456937984>

On December 13, 2016, President Obama signed the 21st Century Cures Act into law, a bill that will provide funding for health care research. The Act will provide \$4.8 billion dollars in funding to the National Institutes of Health with a large portion of the money going to fund cancer research. A significant portion of the funding will also go towards research on how to combat opiate addiction as well as funding for mental health treatment. The Act also includes the establishment of a Health Information Technology (HIT) advisory committee. In addition to establishing a HIT advisory committee, the Act also references telehealth in multiple sections.

For the full text of the Act please visit:

<https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/hr34/BILLS-114hr34enr.pdf>

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