



# Telehealth Delivery of Applied Behavior Analysis to Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders

Yaniz C. Padilla Dalmau, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA  
Outpatient Behavioral Services  
Behavior Analyst

# Goals

- Describe our typical service model
- Why we chose to incorporate telehealth
- Describe our telehealth model
  - 1 year Pilot Project
  - Future Plans

# Virginia Institute of Autism (VIA)



*Helping people overcome the challenges of autism.*

# Outpatient Client Population



*Helping people overcome the challenges of autism.*

# Service Delivery Model

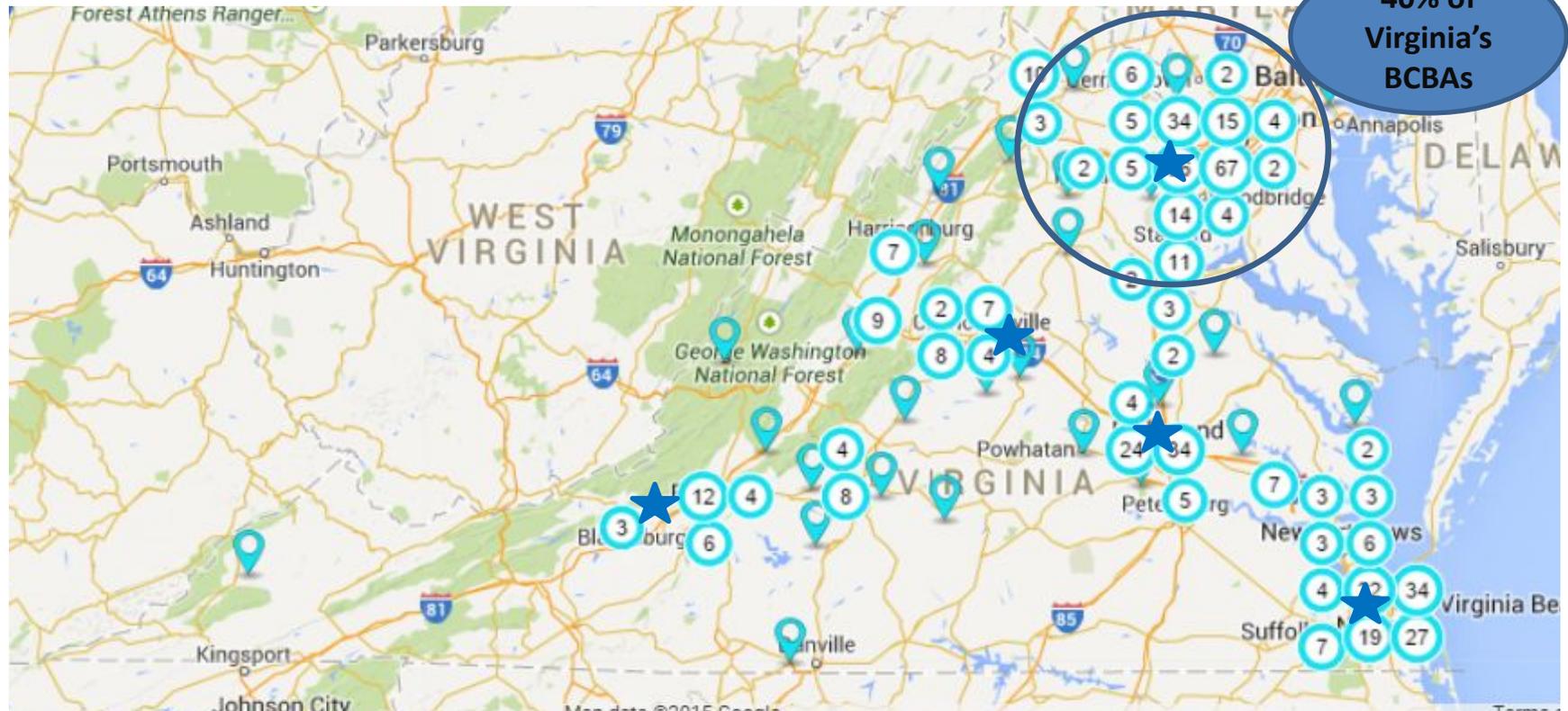


# Location of Service Delivery



# Why telehealth? Virginia's ABA Needs

Licensed Behavior Analysts (LBA) and Licensed Assistant Behavior Analysts (LABA)  
in the Commonwealth of Virginia as of January 30, 2015



Includes 533 LBAs and LABAs. Does not include those who list out of state residences or those who have not yet received their licenses.

As of 1/30/15, there are 544 LBAs and 96 LABAs; there are 496 BCBA's (including Masters and Doctoral), and 89 BCaBA's in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Graphic by Chrsity Evanko, BCBA

*Helping people overcome the challenges of autism.*

**via** VIRGINIA INSTITUTE  
of Autism

# ABA & telehealth

- **Behavioral Assessment** (Barreto et al., 2006; Machalicek et al., 2012; Wacker et al., 2012a)
- **Behavioral Intervention** (Gibson et al., 2010; Wacker et al., 2012b)
- **Results:** Effective implementation, high integrity, high parent acceptability, lower costs, higher efficiency

# VIA's Telehealth Plan

- Developing a sustainable model
- Enhance existing services
- Expand services across the state
  - Identified one community of need to Pilot Telehealth
    - Remote in-person clinic (January 2014-March 2015)
    - Telehealth in-home service (August 2014-March 2015)

# Identifying Community of Need

- Identify partners and planning meetings
  - Fort Lee's Kenner Army Health Clinic
    - Over 30 referrals
    - Around 200 families overall



# Introduction of VIA into the Community

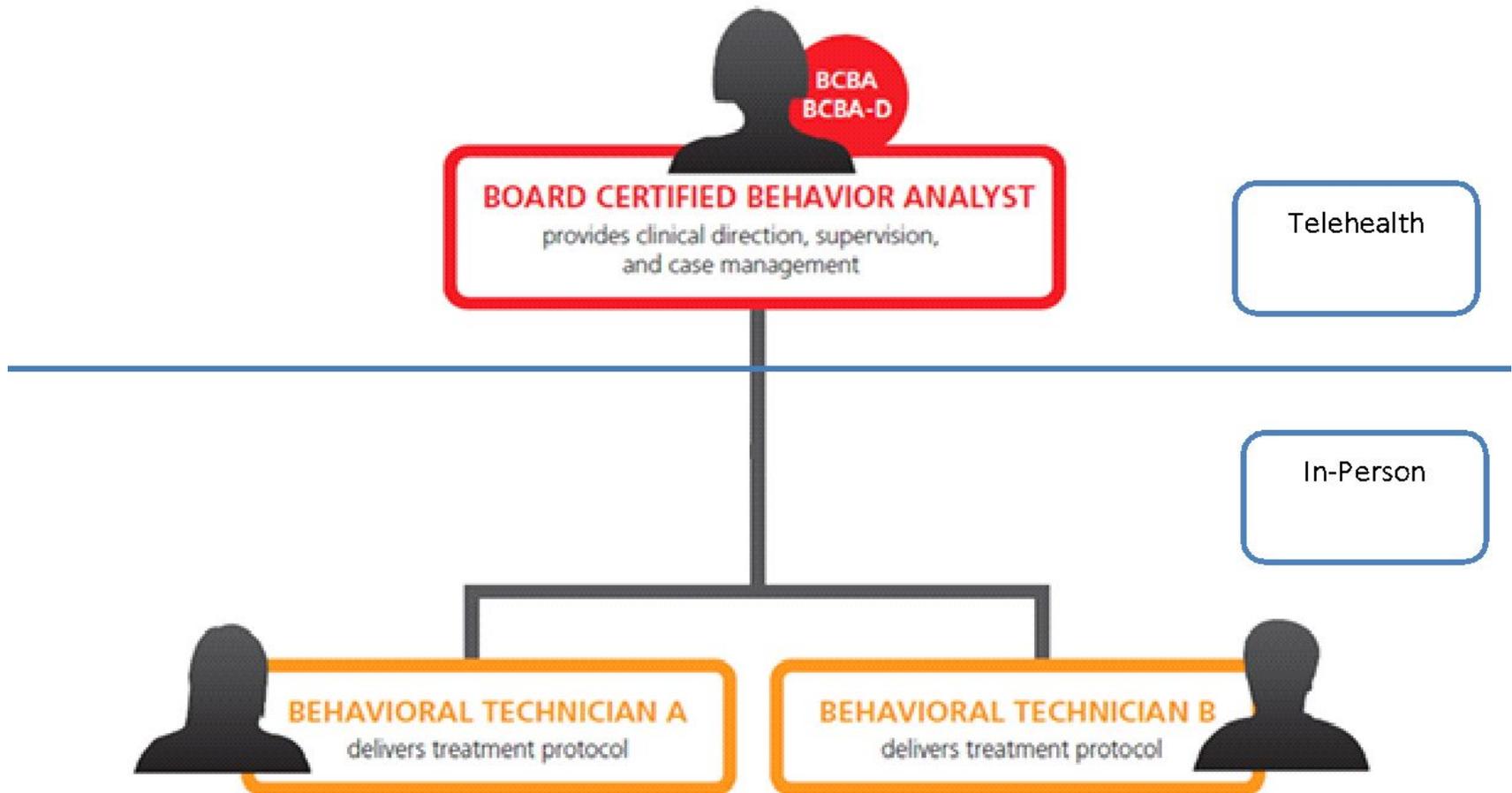
- Start a clinic in the originating community
  - Goals:
    - Build awareness of VIA in the Ft. Lee community
    - Conduct intakes and initial assessments
    - Develop initial treatment plans
    - Begin serving community while telehealth service was approved
  - Structure:
    - Conducted at local church
    - Once per week
    - 4-5 clients per day
    - 1 hour per client
    - Transitioned to in-home and telehealth service



# Introducing Telehealth To the Fort Lee Clinic

- Initial Telehealth Steps
  - Researched technology
  - Consultation with telehealth experts
  - Selected hardware and software
    - Hardware-Client existing hardware
    - Software-VSee free application
  - Obtained authorization from Tricare
  - Portal Testing

# Service Model: Telehealth Supervision



# Fort Lee Service Results

- In-Person Clinic
  - 9 clients, Ages 3-15
  - 1 client moved out of area
- Telehealth Service
  - 3 clients, Ages 3-6
  - Increased service from 1-hour clinic visit to 2-6 hours in home service and 1 hour of telehealth supervision per week.
  - Increased number of goals addressed per child
  - Natural environment
  - Ability to see more clients
  - Cost per year for supervisor time per client
    - \$10,912: In person yearly cost of 1 hour of supervision/week + travel
    - vs.
    - \$1,628: Telehealth yearly cost of 1 hour of supervision/week
  - Staff
    - 1 supervisor/behavior analyst
    - 4 local behavior technicians hired

# Barriers

- Telehealth
  - Delay in authorization for telehealth supervision
  - Hiring local staff
  - Long wait to approve local staff to provide services
- General
  - Complications with reimbursement of services for both in person and telehealth services led to closing of clinic

# Lessons Learned & Future Plans

- Diversify funding sources
  - Pursuing additional sustainable funding opportunities
- Focus on enhancing our existing services with telehealth
- Develop new models
  - Clinics in Charlottesville with follow-up via telehealth
  - All telehealth service
  - Consultation

# Thank You!

[ypadilla@viaschool.org](mailto:ypadilla@viaschool.org)