EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Importance of Digital Equity in Healthcare

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

1. Background information: what is digital equity?

2. Current state of digital equity

3. The relationship between digital equity and health

4. The Digital Equity Act

Speakers:

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About Office of Broadband Development (OBD)

- Established by state legislature in 2013

- Executive Director: Bree Maki

- 1 deputy director; 1 program lead; 1 accounting lead; 7 grant administrators; 1 community engagement coordinator; 1 GIS specialist; 1 office manager

- Programs:

  - Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program

  - Low-Density Broadband Development Grant Program

  - Line Extension Program

  These are specific to Minnesota. Eligible applicants are internet service providers.

  - IIJA: BEAD and DEA

Digital Equity

the **condition** in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy

opportunities and options
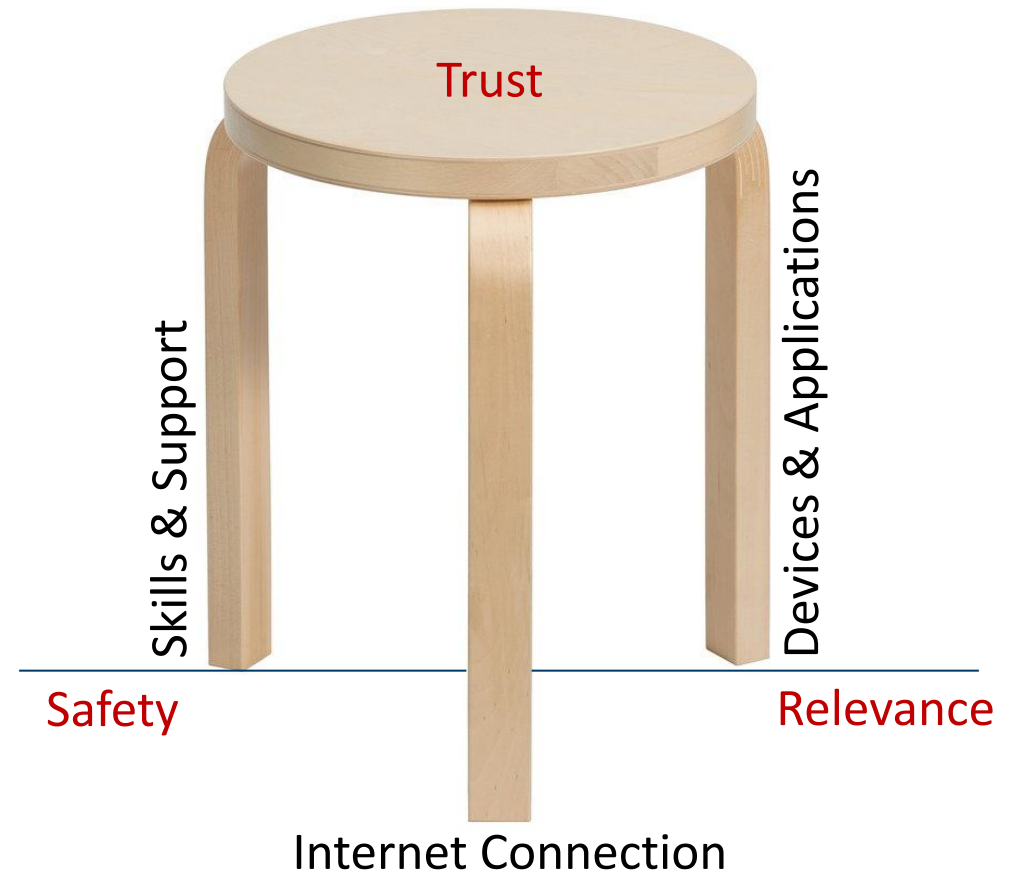
SOURCE: National Digital Inclusion Alliance

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Who is using this stool?
Why are they using this stool?
Why aren't they using this stool?
Is one stool enough?
Would they benefit from a seatback?
Do they want armrests?
What is this stool standing on?
What is the stool made of?
Who built the stool?
Is this stool sturdy?

Skills & Support

Devices & Applications

Internet Connection

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Trust

Skills & Support

Devices & Applications

Safety

Relevance

Internet Connection

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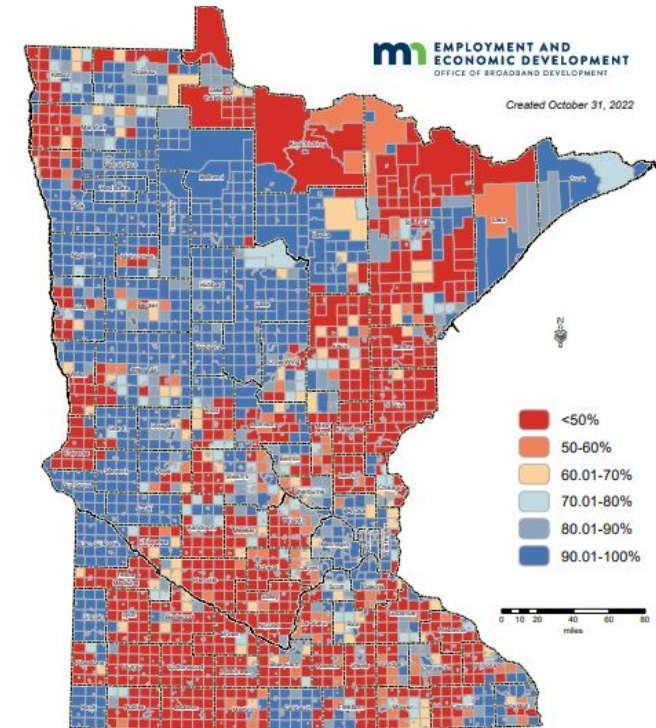
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Current State of Digital Opportunity: Availability

Counties: Fixed service at or above 25/3

Townships: Fixed service at or above 25/3
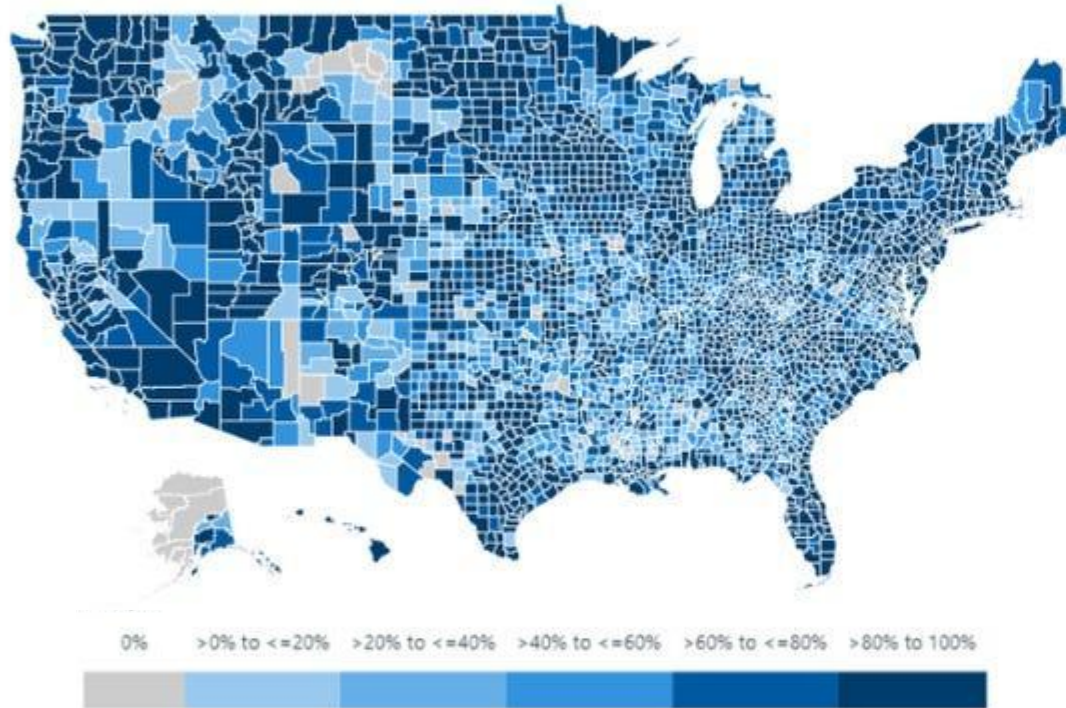
SOURCE: Federal Communications Commission.

SOURCE: MN Office of Broadband Development.
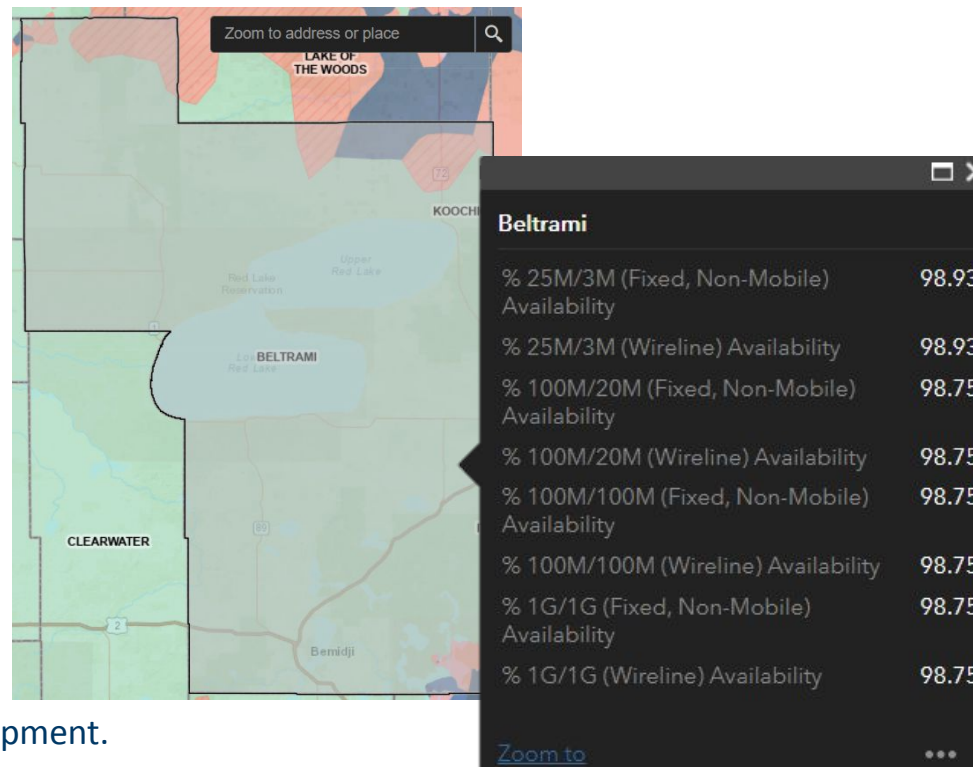
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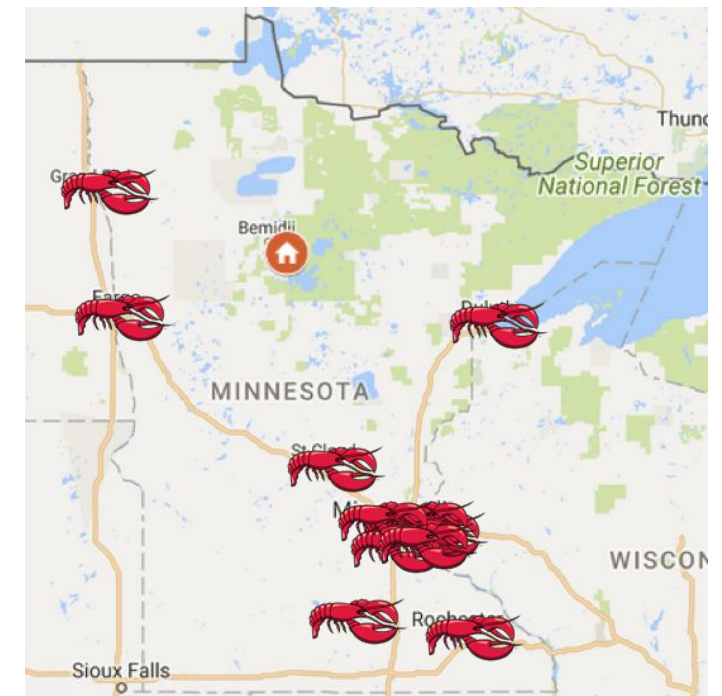# Maps Tell Us One Part of One Story

Townships: Fixed service > 100/20
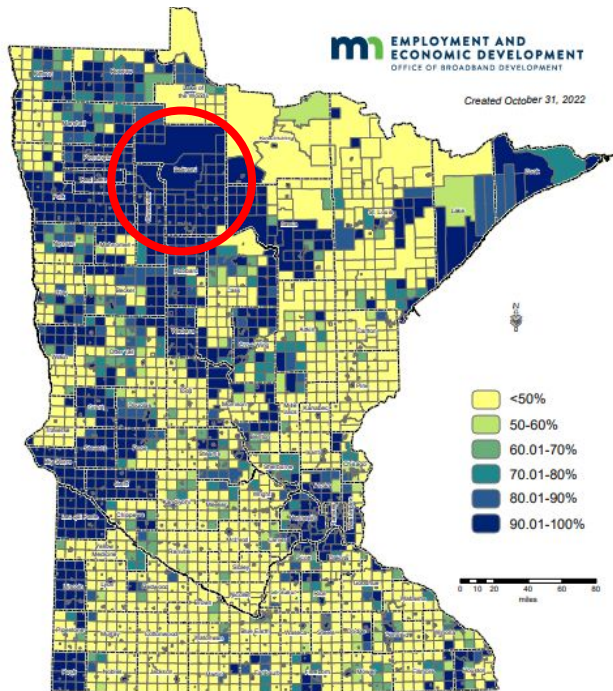
SOURCE: MN Office of Broadband Development.

Beltrami County: Fixed service > 100/20

The Red Lobster Ruralness Metric®

SOURCE: Red Lobster.

(1 of 2)

Census Tract 9400.01
Beltrami County, Minnesota
(27007940001)

Households with a broadband subscription:
73.5%
Population with access to broadband
services of at least 25/3 Mbps: Not
applicable
Employed: 45.9%
Labor force participation: 60.6%
Unemployed: Not applicable
Annual change in employment: Not
applicable
Workers self-employed: 5.7%
Workers that work from home: 6.6%
Weekly wage: Not applicable
Median household income: Not applicable
Poverty (SAIPE): Not applicable
Poverty (ACS): 29.3%
Establishment entry rate: Not applicable

Zoom to

**Beltrami County Census Tracts:
Households with Broadband Subscriptions**

- 90.0 or more
- 80.0 to 89.9
- 70.0 to 79.9
- Less than 70.0

BROADBAND MAP SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, ACCESS BROADBAND Dashboard.
HISTORICAL MAP SOURCE: University of Minnesota.

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Broadband Subscriptions vs. Mobile Data

Group of People	Broadband Subscription	Mobile Data Only
All MN Households	83.7%	10.9%
People Living in Greater MN	66.8%	12.2%
Adults Ages 60+	79.6%	11.8%
People from Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Groups	78.5%	17.4%
Veterans	81.5%	10.2%
People with Disabilities	79.0%	10.8%
People Experiencing Language Barriers	65.3%	21.5%
People Living Under 150% Poverty	75.4%	19.0%

SOURCE: 2017-22 American Community Survey, retrieved from IPUMS.

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Computers vs. Smartphones

Group of People	Laptop or Desktop	Smartphone Only
All Minnesotans	82.1%	7.0%
People Living in Greater MN	77.6%	8.2%
Adults Ages 60+	77.4%	6.0%
People from Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Groups	78.4%	17.2%
Veterans	81.0%	5.8%
People with Disabilities	69.8%	10.3%
People Experiencing Language Barriers	63.0%	28.6%
People Living Under 150% Poverty	68.5%	19.2%

SOURCE: 2017-22 American Community Survey, retrieved from IPUMS.

MN Residents: By Birthplace

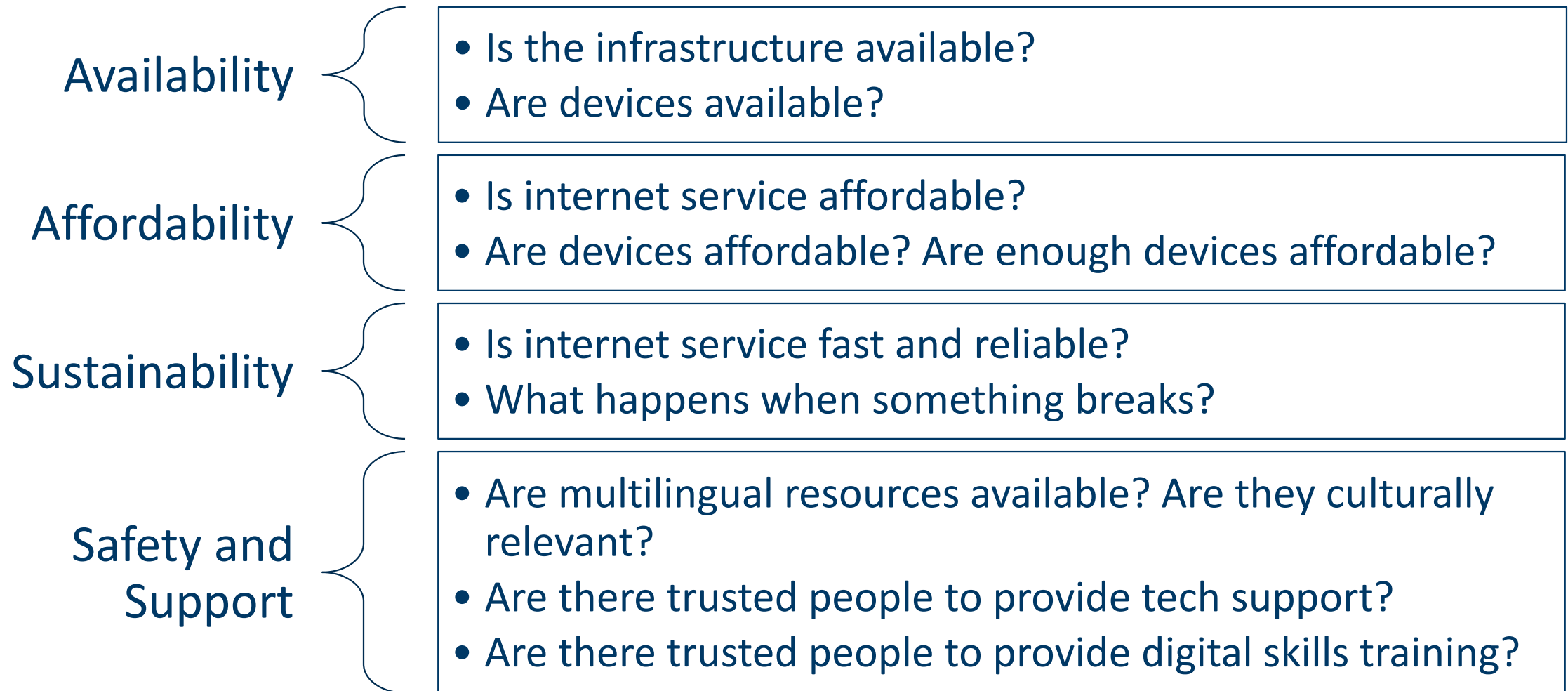| Birthplace	Internet Subscription	Laptop or Desktop	Smartphone	Smartphone Only
In U.S.	93.3%	87.4%	92.4%	8.8%
Outside U.S.	92.9%	82.6%	95.2%	9.0%
Africa	92.3%	77.1%	96.2%	20.9%
Asia	95.0%	89.4%	96.4%	8.5%
Central/South Am.	90.3%	75.8%	93.9%	20.5%
Europe	93.4%	89.6%	91.7%	6.5%

SOURCE: 2017-22 American Community Survey, retrieved from IPUMS.

MN Residents: By English Language Skills

	Internet Subscription	Laptop or Desktop	Smartphone	Smartphone Only
Speaks English Well	93.2%	87.3%	92.3%	9.0%
Speaks A Little English	88.0%	70.7%	93.0%	24.6%
Speaks No English	87.4%	57.7%	87.4%	30.5%

SOURCE: 2017-22 American Community Survey, retrieved from IPUMS.

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Availability
- Is the infrastructure available?
- Are devices available?

Affordability
- Is internet service affordable?
- Are devices affordable? Are enough devices affordable?

Sustainability
- Is internet service fast and reliable?
- What happens when something breaks?

Safety and Support
- Are multilingual resources available? Are they culturally relevant?
- Are there trusted people to provide tech support?
- Are there trusted people to provide digital skills training?

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Health Determinants & Broadband Access

Social determinants of **health**

Influence health outcomes through **day-to-day conditions** and **systems** that shape people's lives
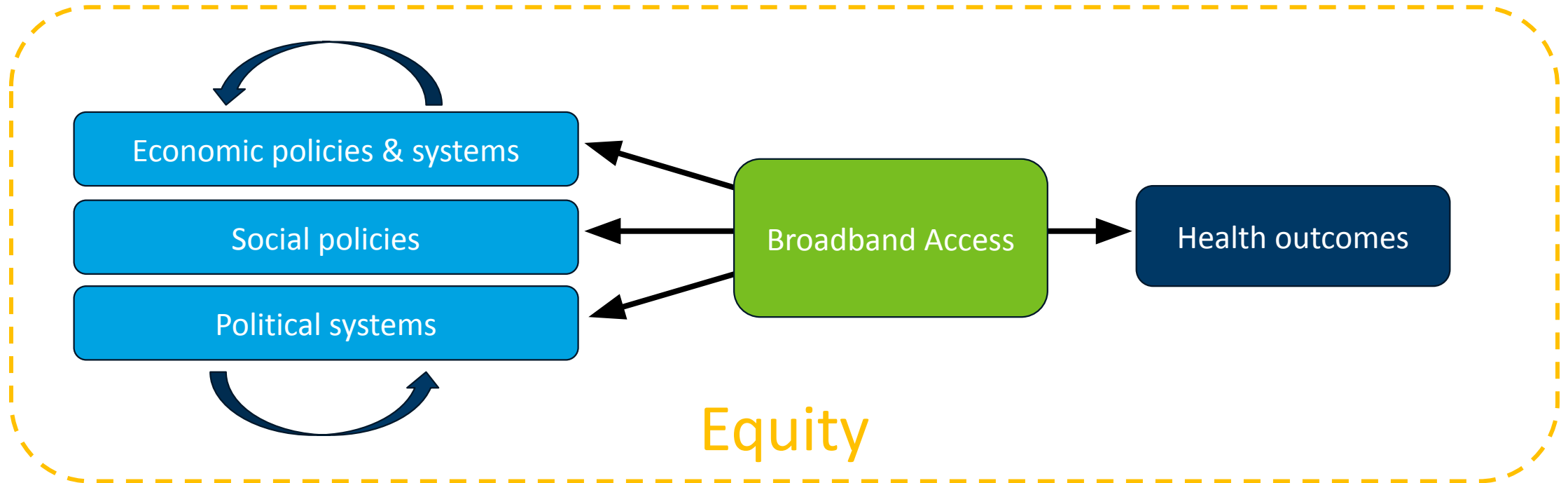

SOURCES: CDC'S <u>SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH</u>; <u>Lawrence (2022)</u>

"...Broadband plays a more direct and consequential role—as a **social determinant of health**, if not as a **'super' determinant of health**"

– Federal Communications Commission's Connect2HealthFCC Task Force

Broadband as a "Super" Determinant of Health

- **Broadband access serves telehealth as:**

  - A way to connect providers to their patients

  - Reduce the burdens of distance and time

- **Broadband access can improve health outcomes through:**

  - Addressing gaps in mental health and substance use treatment

  - Improving rates of chronic disease

  - Making treatment services more accessible
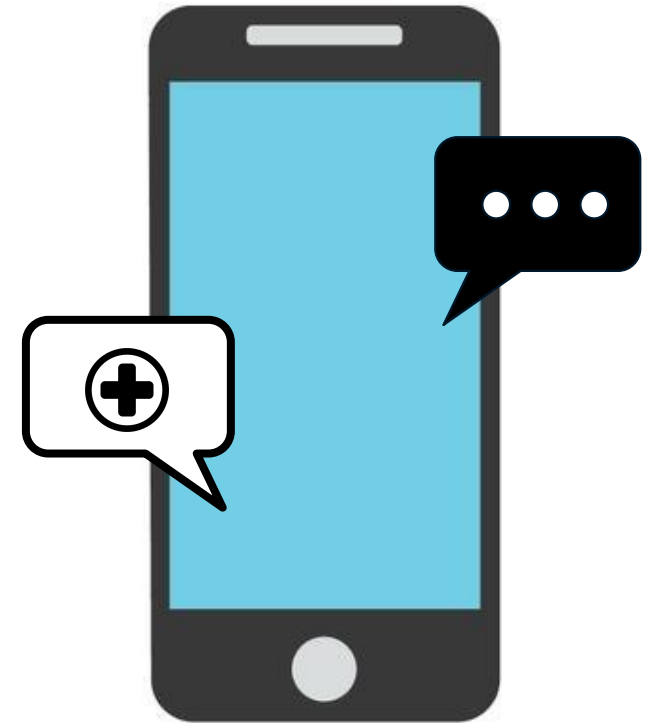
SOURCE: SAMSHA's Digital Access: A Superdeterminant of Health; FCC's Mapping Broadband Health in America; Truong et al., (2022)

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# Digital Equity Initiatives in Healthcare

Libraries Health Connect
Statewide telehealth initiative through Maine Libraries providing technology & training needed for better access to quality healthcare.

Wisconsin Health Literacy
Coalition providing health equity workshops & trainings.

Telehealth for Older Adults
Program providing training focused on helping seniors develop basic digital skills.
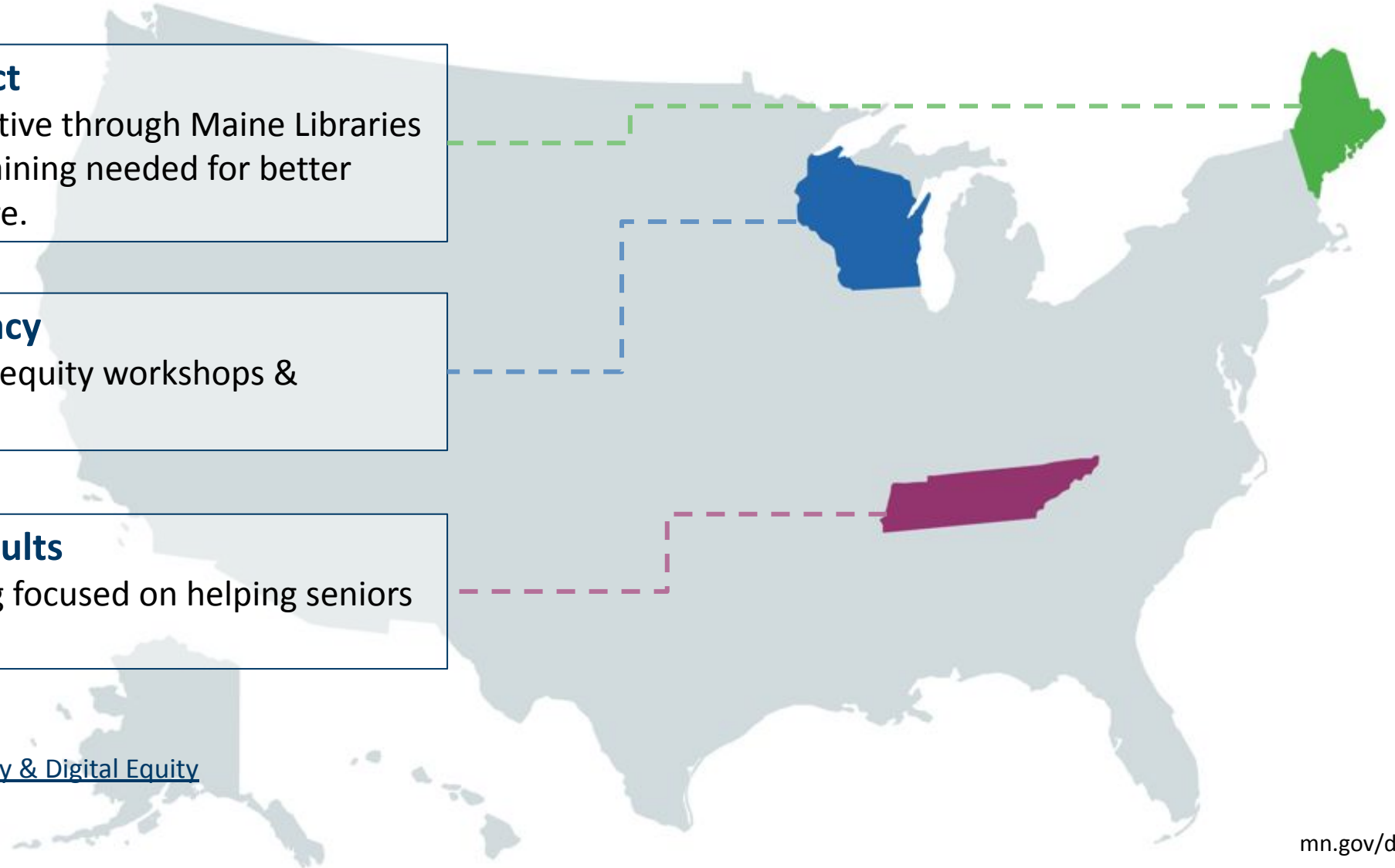
SOURCE: NTIA's Health Equity & Digital Equity

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Today's Agenda

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Digital Equity Act: The Basics

- Included in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (November 2021); administered by National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

- Provides $2.75B for digital equity work

- Three funding categories:

  - $60M in planning grants to states, tribes, and territories (MN = $881,905.10)

  - $1.44B in *capacity grants* to states, tribes, and territories (MN = $12,033,288.01)

  - $1.25B in competitive grants to regional organizations, anchor institutions, etc.

2023	2024 - 2029
• MN used a Planning Grant to develop a statewide Digital Opportunity Plan	• MN uses a *Capacity Grant* to implement statewide Digital Equity Plan • NTIA administers one Competitive Grant round each year

Contents of this crystal ball are predictive and may be proven false.

Use this insight wisely.

May 28	States submit *Round 1 Capacity Grant* application to NTIA
Sept. 2024	States receive *Round 1 Capacity Grant* funds; NTIA launches round 1 Competitive Grants
Nov. 2024	OBD begins rolling out grants to MN places/orgs using the *Round 1 Capacity Grant* funds
Mid-2025	NTIA awards *Round 2 Capacity Grant* to states
Mid-2026	NTIA awards *Round 3 Capacity Grant* to states

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For More Information

Minnesotans

1. Check out MN's digital opportunity webpage: tiny.cc/OBDinclusion

2. Subscribe to OBD's biweekly newsletter: tiny.cc/OBDnews

3. Ask: hannah.buckland@state.mn.us

The Rest of You

1. Say hi your state broadband office staff: broadbandusa.ntia.gov

2. Meet your state's federal program officer: broadbandusa.ntia.gov

3. Ask: hannah.buckland@state.mn.us

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