

## **Community (Virtual) Access to Palliative Expertise (CAPE)**

Funded in 2017-19 by a generous donor foundation, the CAPE program was established to provide the initial infrastructure to build a remote community based palliative care practice focused on the use of telehealth. Dr. Susan McCammon leads the CAPE program, which was incubated through the UAB CPSC. CAPE will ultimately also allow virtual consultation to other providers (hospices, medical directors, etc.) with complicated patients. The funding for CAPE has allowed the initially hiring of a transitional care coordinator RN to facilitate the building of the infrastructure and operational flow particularly for home based in person and telehealth visits. These visits began initially at other facilities including health departments throughout the state of Alabama who were equipped with telehealth technology. Additionally the funds from CAPE have provided direct protected compensation for the medical providers while reimbursement initially lagged behind service delivery. Through CAPE the CPSC has also been able to partner with one patient reported outcome app called TapCloud to pilot test the utility of having patient remote monitoring of symptom burden to help proactively manage patients with a variety of issues.

Additionally, there are currently several palliative and supportive care telehealth research projects that demonstrate the capacity-building efforts and extensive resources in place at UAB which have been rapidly accelerated during the COVID 19 pandemic.

- ENABLE CHF-PC Comprehensive Heartcare for patients with heart failure and their family caregivers,
- Community-developed, Culturally-based Tele-Consult Program for African American and White Rural Southern Elders with a Life-limiting Illness (PCORI),
- REACH PC: Comparative Effectiveness of Early Integrated Telehealth versus In-Person Palliative Care for Patients with Advanced Lung Cancer

These studies and programs are implemented under Dr. McCammon's leadership and with the expertise of Drs. Marie Bakitas, Rodney Tucker, Nick Dionne-Odom, and Ronit Elk. Dr. Dionne-Odom brings a wealth of experience in telehealth palliative care coaching and developing and testing tele-behavioral early palliative care interventions to enhance support of rural, underserved family caregivers of persons with advanced cancer within the School of Nursing.