



# Idaho Medical Association

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**Identifying Broadband Needs in Idaho** Idaho is working to improve its broadband access and uptake through an initiative called LinkIDAHO. Broadband helps healthcare providers better manage patient care through secure use and sharing of health information. Broadband is particularly important to health care in rural communities where they have less access to healthcare specialists.

LinkIDAHO is working with the State of Idaho Office of the CIO to administer a statewide broadband mapping and planning grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA). A main goal of the grant is to identify broadband availability, needs and opportunities through mapping and planning activities which include:

- An assessment of the current availability, adoption and use of broadband communications infrastructure throughout the state.
- The development of specific strategies to fill current gaps in broadband access.
- The development of plans to expand the adoption of deployed broadband.

A broadband demand survey was just released to gather information about the broadband needs in communities and for health care providers. Healthcare providers can let their broadband needs be known through filling out the survey at <http://www.idahodashboard.org/healthdemandintro>.

The data from the Broadband Demand Survey will be used to create a demand map that will show areas of need, areas being served and demonstrate strategic areas of investment. Project staff has already gathered a substantial amount of mapping and planning data to support this work, which can be found at [www.linkidaho.org](http://www.linkidaho.org).

A module designed to educate stakeholders about the benefits of health information technology has also been developed and is available at <http://www.idahodashboard.org/node/376>.

Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP) is leading planning activities in the state. For more information about LinkIDAHO visit [www.linkidaho.org](http://www.linkidaho.org) or contact Mike Field, LinkIDAHO Statewide Broadband Coordinator at [Mike.Field@irp.idaho.gov](mailto:Mike.Field@irp.idaho.gov) or 208-332-8699.