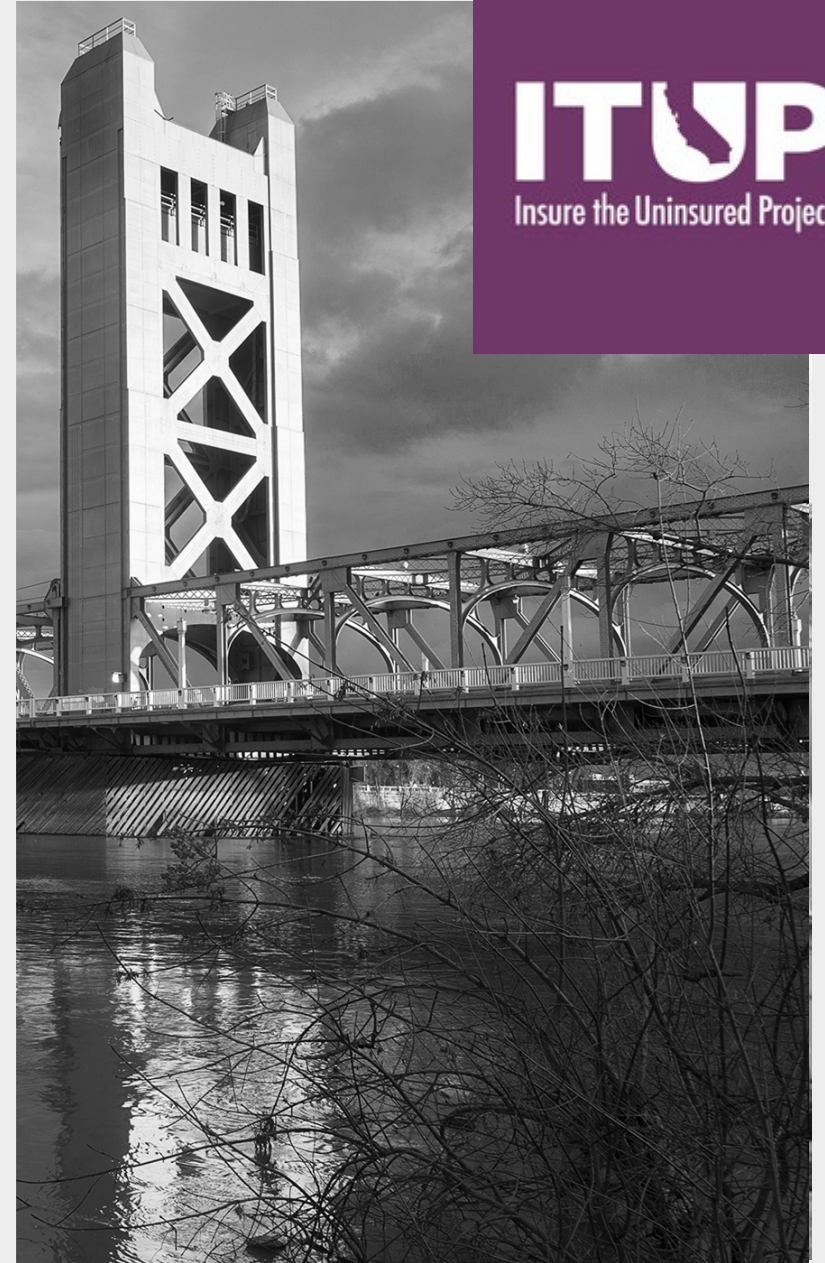


# Health, Equity, and the Digital Divide

Katie Heidorn, MPA

Executive Director, Insure the Uninsured Project (ITUP)



# Introductions



- Name
- Organization
- Why do you want to engage more on broadband? How does broadband impact your work?

# ITUP Mission & Vision



## Mission

ITUP's **mission** is to promote innovative and workable policy solutions that expand health care access and improve the health of all Californians. ITUP implements its mission through policy-focused research and broad-based stakeholder engagement.

## Vision

ITUP **believes** that all Californians should have a fair opportunity to live their healthiest lives.

## Values

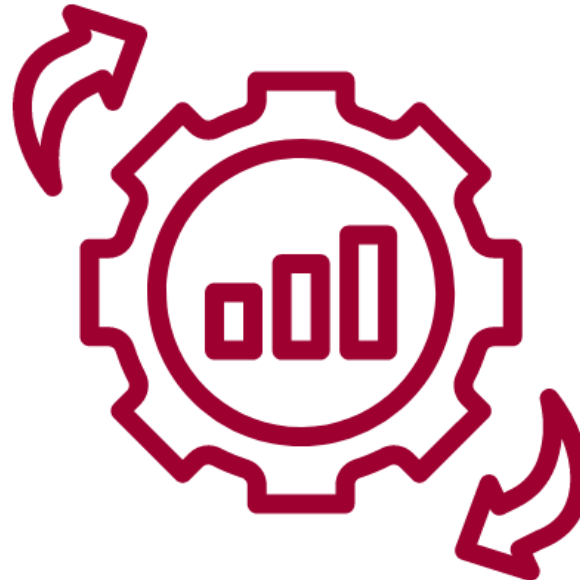
ITUP seeks a **health system** that is: universal, equitable, accessible, effective, and affordable.

# Policy Priority Areas

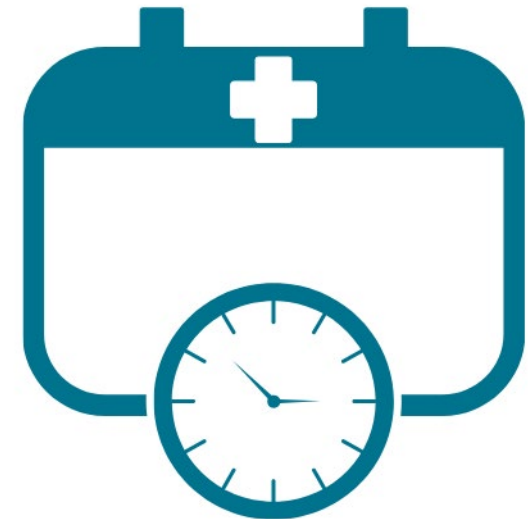
## Coverage and Access



## Delivery System Transformation



## The Future of Health



# ITUP Broadband Convening Goals



## Inform

- Bridge the Knowledge Gap: Health Care and Broadband
- Connectivity + Virtual Care = Better Health Outcomes

## Identify

- Opportunities for Health Sector Engagement
- Timely, Critical Engagement Opportunities at the Local, State, and National Level

## Activate

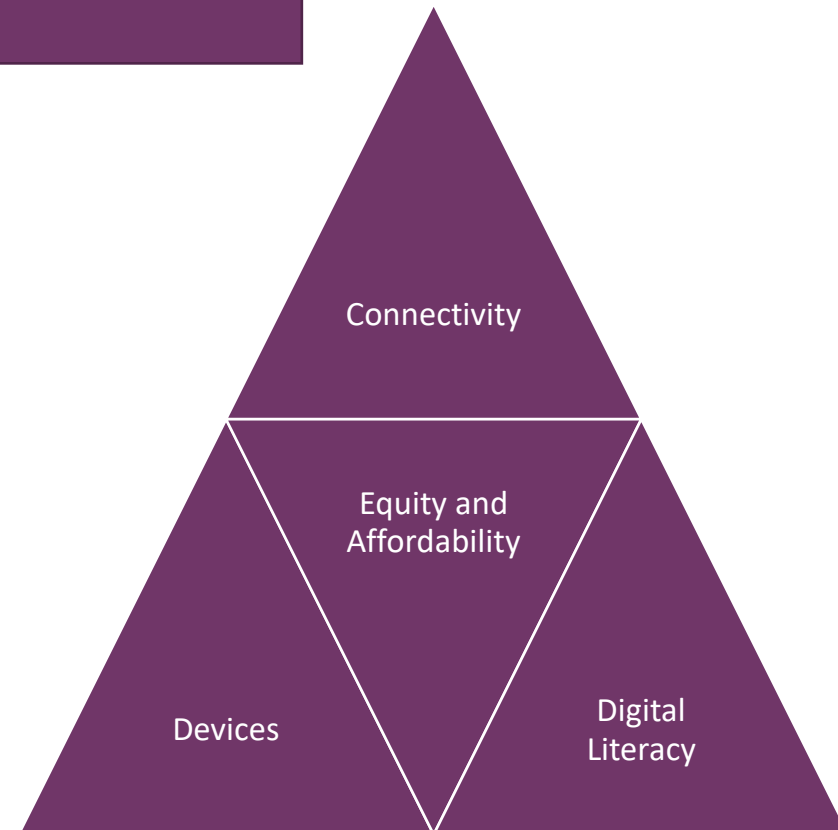
- Engage in Local, State, and National Stakeholder Processes/Meetings
- Apply for and Receive Funding

# Why Focus on Broadband?



The future of health care and health care innovation is grounded in technology.

**Our Goal:** To Achieve the Potential of  
Telehealth/Virtual Care, Data Exchange,  
Health Access, Equity



# What is Broadband?

- Backbone/Long Haul - *massive networks with national and major regional reach. The networks run to buildings that act as exchange points, where data is passed between and across regional and local networks and providers. These are typically located in the larger metropolitan areas, including One Wilshire in downtown Los Angeles.*
- Middle Mile - *high-capacity fiber-optic cables that traverse long distances (e.g., 10s-100s of miles) to connect communities to the Internet backbone. These high-capacity lines are analogous to transmission lines for electric utilities, or aqueducts and rivers for water utilities.*
- Last Mile - *cables or wireless bandwidth that connect individual addresses to the nearest utility poles or towers which connect communities to the middle mile.*

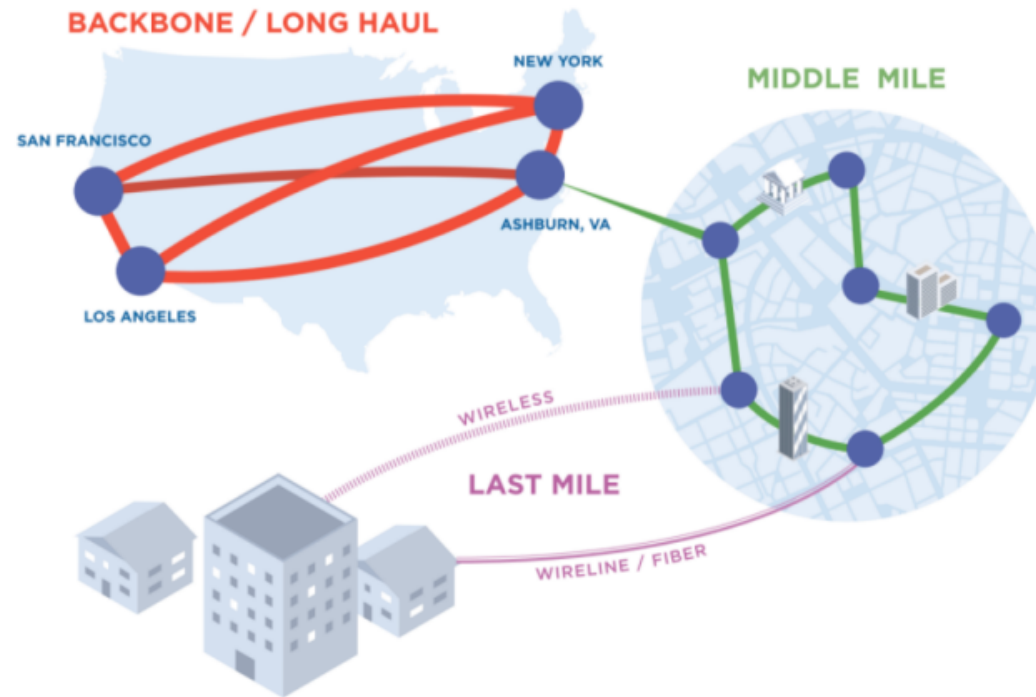


Illustration source: If We Build It, Will They Come? Lessons from Open-Access, Middle-Mile Networks  
[https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/OAMM\\_networks.pdf](https://www.benton.org/sites/default/files/OAMM_networks.pdf)



# How much broadband speed do residents need?

## LIGHT



## MEDIUM



## HEAVY



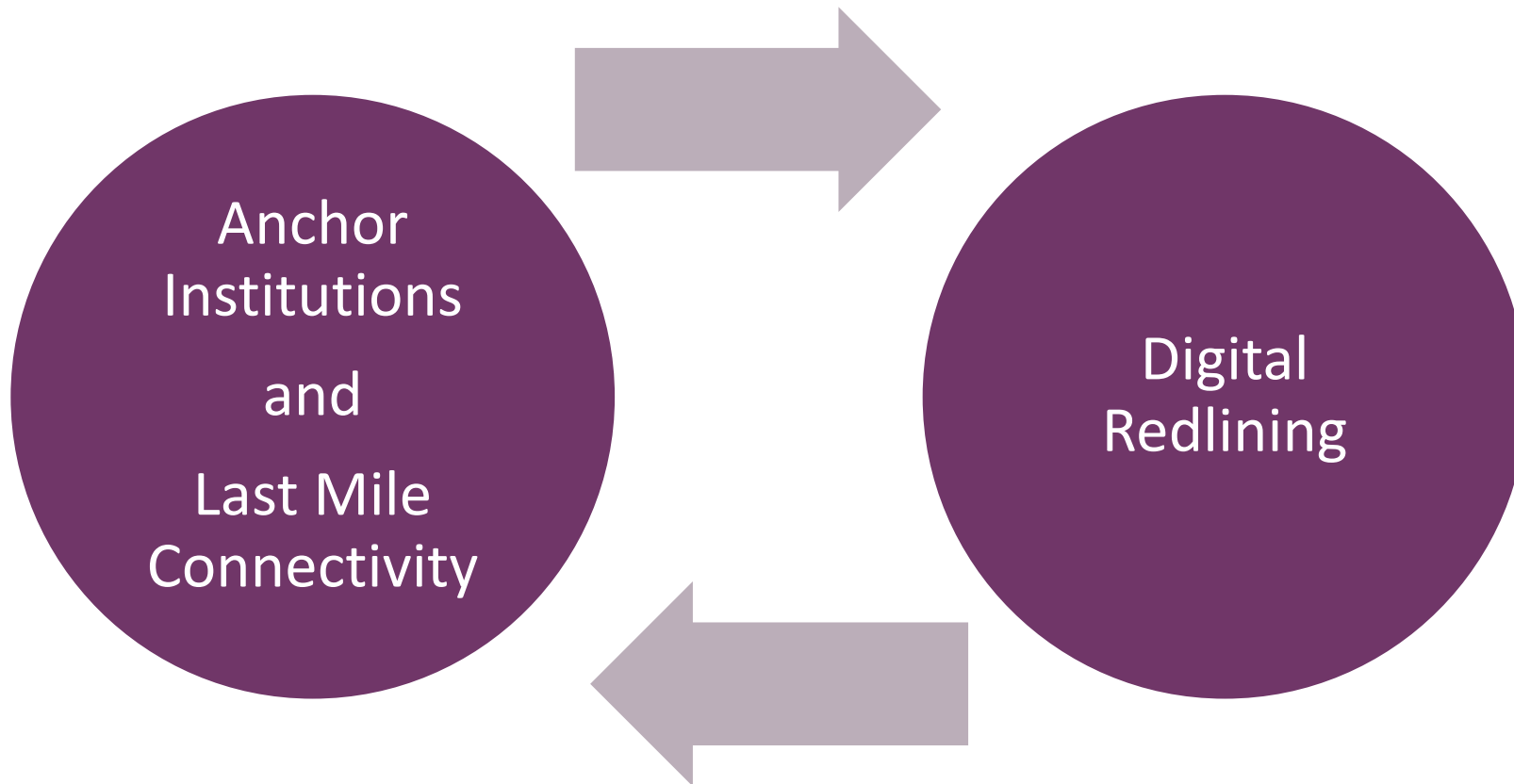
1 device	8 Mbps	8 Mbps	25 Mbps
2 devices	8 Mbps	25 Mbps	25 Mbps
3 devices	25 Mbps	25 Mbps	50+ Mbps
4 devices	25 Mbps	50+ Mbps	50+ Mbps

\* Download speeds only.

Source: FCC

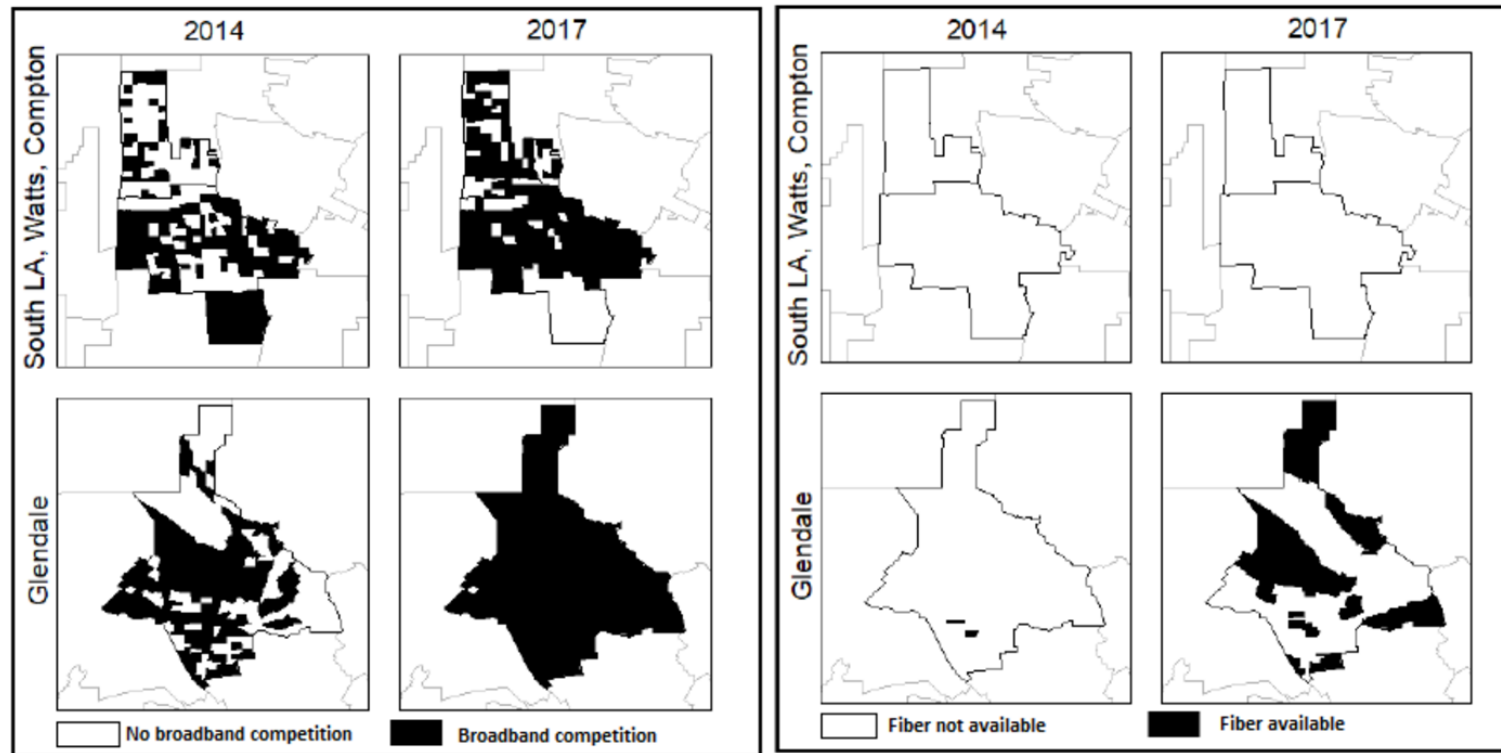


# Broadband Infrastructure in Communities



# Example of Digital Redlining From Los Angeles County

Figure 7: Broadband competition and fiber availability in South Los Angeles vs. Glendale (2014 and 2017).



Source: Who Gets Access to Fast Broadband? Evidence from Los Angeles County 2014-17,  
<http://arnicusc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Policy-Brief-4-final.pdf>

# Closing the Digital Divide: Investments



- CA Commitment to Continuing PHE Telehealth Flexibilities
  - CA Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
  - Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
  - CA Department of Aging (CDA)
- CA's "Broadband for All" Initiative and \$6.5 Billion
  - Government Operations Agency (GovOps Agency)
  - CA Department of Technology (CDT)
  - CA Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
- Federal Broadband \$45 Billion Dollars in the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA)
  - Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
  - National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

# Roles for the Health Organizations



- Local, State, and National Opportunities for Health
  - Infrastructure
    - Local Builds and Engagement
    - Become an “Anchor Institution”
    - State Engagement in Middle Mile and Last Mile Policy and Planning
      - CA Alliance for Digital Equity Coalition (CADE)
    - National Coalitions
      - Schools, Libraries, and Health Broadband Coalition (SHLB)
      - National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)

# Roles for Health Organizations



Leveraging the Health Care Workforce to Connect Consumers to Affordable Internet, Devices, and Digital Literacy Services and Programs:

- Community health workers, health insurance enrollment navigators, and community-based organizations can be leveraged for:

Affordable  
Connectivity  
Program (ACP)  
Outreach and  
Enrollment

Getting  
Appropriate,  
Useful Devices  
to Individuals  
and Families

Connecting  
Individuals to  
Digital Literacy  
Training and  
Services

# State-Level Broadband Engagement



- **California Public Utilities Commission**
  - [Regional Broadband Consortia](#)
  - [Funding Opportunities](#)
    - [Broadband Adoption Account](#)
    - [California Teleconnect Fund](#)
    - Broadband Public Housing Account (Implementation Rulemaking Underway)
- **California Department of Technology, [Broadband for All Initiative](#)**
  - [Middle-Mile Advisory Committee](#)
  - [California Broadband Council](#)
  - State Digital Equity Plan (forthcoming)
- **Legislature**
- **Budget**

# Where to Learn More, Activate, and Meaningfully Engage on Broadband



- [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](#) (NDIA)
- [National Telecommunications and Information Administration](#) (NTIA)
  - Federal government agency that administers programs and policymaking on broadband and internet expansion efforts across the country
- [Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC)
- [California Public Utilities Commission](#) (CPUC)



# Where to Learn More, Activate, and Meaningfully Engage on Broadband



## ITUP LA Partners in Advancing Digital Equity

LA County  
Department  
of Internal  
Services

California  
Community  
Foundation  
(CCF) Digital  
Equity  
Initiative

Community  
Clinic  
Association  
of Los  
Angeles  
County  
(CCALAC)

LA DEAL

Shared  
Harvest Fund

LA County  
Department  
of Health  
Services

CA Advancing  
Digital Equity  
(CADE)  
Coalition

# Los Angeles Commitments to Digital Equity and Inclusion



- [Los Angeles County Investments to Accelerate Digital Equity](#)
- LA County Delete the Divide Initiative
  - LA County Department of Internal Services
- Affordable Connectivity Program Enrollment
- LA Regional Broadband Consortium—LA Digital Equity Action League (LA DEAL)
- CA Community Foundation (CCF) Digital Equity Initiative
- Hyper-Local Project: Destination Crenshaw

## Discussion:

- Have you engaged on any of these efforts? If so, how?
- What other local opportunities can health partners engage with to advance digital equity in Los Angeles?

# ITUP Call to Action



- Bring more health champions to state decision making around broadband investments
- Make sure Los Angeles County hospitals and health clinics are engaging as anchor institutions in efforts to expand broadband to your communities
- Leverage significant federal and state broadband funding to support equity and access in health care
- Leverage health care workforce and champions to get consumers connected to sufficient, affordable internet—expanding the access to and power of telehealth and virtual care efforts throughout the state

# Discussion





# Next Steps for Engagement



## What's Next for Elevating Health Voices in Broadband Efforts:

- Second ITUP-led convening: July 19, 2022
- Plug Into Your Local Infrastructure Conversations—ITUP Can Connect
- Engage in ACP Outreach—ITUP Can Help

# Learn More



**ITUP Broadband for Health Basics Fact Sheet:**

<https://www.itup.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Broadband-and-Health-Basics-FINAL-V1.pdf>

**ITUP LA Health Collaborative: Addressing Broadband as a Social Driver of Health:**

<https://www.itup.org/events/la-health-collaborative-may-5-2022/>

**Broadband 101 Fact Sheet:**

<https://www.calfund.org/wp-content/uploads/CCF-Digital-Equity-Initiative-Glossary-of-Terms-FINAL-2.3.22.pdf>

**Digital Equity Fact Sheets:**

<https://ilsr.org/exploring-digital-equity-fact-sheets/>

**California Community Foundation Initiative: Glossary of Terms:**

<https://www.calfund.org/wp-content/uploads/CCF-Digital-Equity-Initiative-Glossary-of-Terms-FINAL-2.3.22.pdf>

**California 'Broadband for All' Initiative:**

<https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/>



# Thank you!

**Contact: Katie Heidorn**

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[www.itup.org](http://www.itup.org)

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# Key Definitions for Health



**Anchor Institutions:** Anchor institutions are flagship community institutions that are sometimes connected to fiber even when fiber services are not commercially available to the broader community. Because of this, they can act as a connection to the Internet backbone. Health care facilities, schools, and libraries are examples of anchor institutions.

**Digital Equity:** The state of all members of a community having equal access and sufficient digital literacy to use communication technologies.

**Internet Service Providers (ISPs):** An entity that provides broadband services to subscribers/consumers.

**Unserved Household:** The California Public Utilities Code defines an unserved household as a household for which no facility-based broadband service at speeds of at least 6Mbps downstream and 1Mbps upstream.

# Key Definitions for Health



**Last Mile:** The portion of the internet which connects ISPs' shared infrastructure to end users, such as homes or businesses. For example, in a cellular wireless network, the last mile is the wireless connection between a base station and an individual mobile device. Sometimes this is also called the "first mile."

**Middle Mile:** This is a term most often referring to the network connection between the region and/or local network to the core network, or, the greater internet. For instance, in a rural area, the middle mile would likely connect the town's network to a larger metropolitan area where it interconnects with major ISPs.

**Municipal Network:** A broadband network owned by a local government, or "municipality". These networks take many forms, from modest networks serving a few businesses to networks that are available at every address across a community. Some are run by the municipality and others are managed by an ISP under contract.

# Other Definitions



**Bandwidth:** The speed of transmitting information across a network. Generally, higher bandwidth is desirable, especially the more individuals and devices use the same source of broadband. The amount of bandwidth available to you can determine whether you download a photo in 2 seconds or 2 minutes.

**Broadband Speed:** Typically, there are two different types of speeds the average consumer uses: download speed and upload speed.

- **Download Speed:** Also referred to as downstream internet connection, download speed refers to the rate at which the user's device can receive data from the internet.
- **Upload Speeds:** Also referred to as upstream internet connection, upload speed refers to the rate at which the user's computer can send data to the Internet. Often times, DSL and cable internet only offer upload speeds at 1/10 of download speeds, which make them insufficient for modern day internet needs, like live video calls or virtual conference presentations. Fiber-optic internet networks more readily have robust connections for both upload and download needs.

# Other Definitions



**California Public Utilities Commission:** The California regulatory agency that regulates privately-owned public utilities that includes telecommunications, or broadband.

**Federal Communications Commission (FCC):** The federal agency with the authority in promoting competition, innovation, and investment in broadband services. The FCC defines broadband and determines the metrics for determining whether a household or business has access to sufficient broadband internet. **The current metric was set in 2015 as 25 Mbps download speeds and 3 Mbps upload speeds.**

**Fixed Wireless:** A connectivity model that uses stationary wireless technology to bridge the “last mile” between the Internet backbone and the subscriber/consumer.<sup>v</sup> This can be contrasted with **Mobile Wireless** which is transmitted from a stationary source to a moving cellphone, tablet, or laptop (cellular data, for example).