



Profiles of Technology
IN TENNESSEE

Broadband Serves the Medical Needs of Inmates Without the Risk of Transport

Name: Detention Healthcare Associates, Inc.

Location: Gainesboro/Jackson County

Products/Services: Telehealth to detention facilities

Leadership: Rich Ellis, President and CEO

Founded: 2005

Reach: Regional

Innovative Insight:

“We’re constantly looking at new ways to expand. This level of technology is just so exciting! Doctors are listening to sounds from hundreds of miles away. The capabilities of this technology are just so huge!”

Importance of Broadband:

“People want to have healthcare closer to home, or even in the home, and the only way we are going to be able to do that is through broadband. It’s going to be an awakening.”

Gainesboro, TN – An innovative telemedicine initiative that has its roots in East Tennessee is keeping Tennessee’s jails – and streets – safer, via broadband technology.

Detention Healthcare Associates, Inc. (DHCA) got its start four years ago in Gainesboro, Tennessee and today services 13 detention facilities throughout Tennessee as well as jails in North Carolina and Georgia. The system can connect doctors, nurses and office staff to prisoners through videoconferencing, keeping the inmates in jail as much as possible while eliminating the potential security risks and cost of physically transporting the patient.

DHCA provides medical services, as well as mental health and dental evaluations, all via a broadband connection. DHCA President and CEO Rich Ellis says telemedicine truly is the future of healthcare.

“We see the value of being able to have instant communication with physicians,” Rich explains. “We’re constantly looking at new ways to expand. This level of technology is just so exciting! The technology is here now. Doctors are listening to sounds from hundreds of miles away. The capabilities of this technology are just so huge!”

Rich says the jails love the telemedicine system and use it on a daily basis. And with business in Johnson City, Knoxville, Kingsport and many other East Tennessee communities, as well as expansion into Kentucky, North Carolina and Georgia, he feels confident the need for broadband is going to continue to grow.

“People want to have healthcare closer to home, or even in the home, and the only way we are going to be able to do that is through broadband. It’s going to be an awakening,” he predicts. “It’s slow – but it’s coming.”

About TN 95:

Citizens across the state are using technology in innovative ways to ensure that Tennessee remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. Connected Tennessee is profiling businesses and Tennesseans in each of the state's 95 counties to identify lessons learned on the path to successful innovation. For more information visit our Web site at www.connectedtn.org or call 615-242-9508.