



Video Conferencing for Specialty Care and Consultants



Many patients in need of access to speciality care are unable to travel to see the specialist as often as is necessary for effective treatment. This is exacerbated in cases where a patient with complex medical issues needs access to multiple specialists. Rural clinics also need access to specialists in order to provide the continuum of care necessary to treat patients effectively.

Issue

The need to connect rural patients efficiently with dispersed care teams starting with the initial consultation.

The need for primary physicians to consult with specialists as they monitor patients' chronic conditions.

The need to provide urgent and emergency care.

The Solution

Video conferencing makes it easier for patients in rural communities to access urban specialists, right from the onset of a health problem, to determine if an in-person office visit is necessary. If so, the specialist can pro-actively order any preliminary tests needed so the visit can be as productive as possible. With video conferencing, the specialist can review the initial treatment plan with a local physician, and together they can monitor the patient's progress during the course of treatment. At each step, the delay and cost of travel is reduced or eliminated for everyone. Patients with illness or disability that makes mobility difficult are also spared the discomfort or possible trauma that might result from travel.

Nurses and primary care physicians can easily consult with specialists without delays that can adversely impact a patient's treatment program. Using video conferencing, care teams can also integrate patient families into the treatment process to help them to be a more effective support system for patients.

Specialists can use video conferencing to regularly monitor patients at home and identify potential problems before they become an issue.

Video conferencing can connect patients to specialists during critical emergency situations such as strokes and heart attacks that require immediate attention. Video conferencing can connect on-call physicians to care teams and patients within a few minutes.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEEDS?

- Are your rural patients unable to travel to receive the care they need because of time or cost constraints?
- Could local health clinics better serve the chronically ill through remote consults with specialists?
- Are your specialists spending more time travelling and less time treating patients?
- Do you lack tele-stroke or tele-cardiology services to quickly address emergency situations?
- Do school-based health care centres need access to specialists?

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