Medical Conditions Appropriate for Telemedicine in Primary and Urgent Care: A Literature Review and Survey

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Introduction

• American Telemedicine Association is the leading international resource and advocate for promoting the use of advanced remote medical technologies

• Diverse membership of individual providers, healthcare institutions, companies and other organizations interested in deploying telemedicine

• Mission includes:
  • Educating and engaging government, payers and the public in telemedicine
  • Clearinghouse of information and services
  • Promoting research, education and innovation
Introduction

- Telemedicine management of the patient may involve:
  - Direct medical care
  - Diagnosis and development of a treatment plan
  - Triage and referral of the patient to obtain additional information for a final diagnosis and/or treatment
- December 2014 – Practice Guidelines for Live, On Demand Primary and Urgent Care released
Methodology

**Literature Review:** Review of published randomized controlled trials, controlled and observational trials between 2010 and 2015 using keywords “telemedicine,” “telehealth,” “mHealth,” “eHealth,” “digital health” and a list of common medical conditions seen in primary care. The literature review is currently underway and ongoing; selected findings are presented.

**Survey:** 200 organizations and companies involved in providing telemedicine services were sent the survey to identify the most common conditions treated via phone and/or video-based encounters in primary and urgent care settings. Survey domains/topics included:

- Services Provided
- Volume of Services
- Provision of telemedicine services (video-based, audio only or both)
- Electronic Prescribing
Findings – Survey (n=39)

Type of Provider
- Private Group Practice: 28%
- Health System: 41%
- Direct-to-Consumer: 23%
- Health Plan/MCO: 5%
- Academic: 3%

Services provided
- Low-Acuity Acute Conditions: 26
- Chronic Disease Management: 17
- Behavioral Health Services: 17
## Findings – Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Literature Review</th>
<th>Survey Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of minor wounds</td>
<td>✓ (1)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns (e.g., minor, sunburn)</td>
<td>✓ (2, 3)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza (uncomplicated)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>✓ (4, 5, 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinary tract infections (uncomplicated in non-pregnant women and in the absence of vaginitis)</td>
<td>✓ (7)</td>
<td>✓ (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common rashes (e.g., contact dermatitis, shingles)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergic rhinitis</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinusitis (uncomplicated)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Conjunctivitis (e.g., uncomplicated viral or allergic)</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constipation</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acid Reflux</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion and Recommendations

Survey:
• Many organizations currently providing telemedicine for a wide variety of common primary and urgent care medical conditions
• Majority of organizations provide video-based telemedicine services
• Most common medical conditions seen by survey respondents were common rashes, assessment of minor wounds, uncomplicated rash

Literature Review:
• Few evidence-based studies qualify for review between 2010 and 2015
• Existing evidence seems to favor audio/phone-based management
• Additional 14 medical conditions will be reviewed
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References


