Introduction to Telehealth

by Capella Healthcare

WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the challenges and solutions related to telehealth. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Challenges
2. Solutions

1. Challenges

Modern healthcare faces many challenges. Consumers lack access to care, must choose between food and medication, and struggle with gaining affordable health insurance. Clinicians are being asked to provide the highest quality healthcare while being stretched to the limits with documentation requirements and dispersed geographic coverage. Hospitals and healthcare networks must meet increasing expectations to improve care outcomes and safety while lowering healthcare costs. In addition, medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy.

According to a recent Gallup poll, 70 percent of Americans say healthcare has "major problems" or is in a "state of crisis." We cannot continue to conduct business as usual. Healthcare leaders are calling for new care delivery models that can transcend these challenges such as:

- Lack of access to quality care
- Provider burnout
- Care gaps in chronic disease management
- Capacity management
- Escalating costs

2. Solutions

As a sustainable care delivery model, telemedicine is taking patient outcomes and cost savings to the next level. As the industry searches for new approaches to the aforementioned challenges, virtual healthcare delivery has become a clinically and economically viable option alongside ambulatory and acute care.

Telehealth connects individuals and their healthcare professionals when a face-to-face interaction is not

possible or not clinically necessary, and facilitates provider-to-provider consultations. Patients are able to receive care, get information about their condition, learn self-management skills for chronic disease, arrange for prescriptions, consult with a provider, and receive a diagnosis using telehealth services. In the past 30 years telehealth has been in use, it has been consistently shown to be a safe, reliable, and effective modality to deliver care. It is a convenient option for both patients and the clinicians providing care, and a secure environment for the collection and transmission of personal health information (PHI). These characteristics in combination extend where and how care is delivered for a more connected, stronger healthcare system.

Telehealth and virtual visits can increase access to care for underserved and vulnerable populations, rural communities, active-duty military personnel, and individuals unable to gain an in-person care visit, ensuring that everyone has safe, reliable, and effective care when and where they need it. Telehealth allows care to expand outside the traditional hospital to the community to reach a wider population, to improve health, create efficiencies, reduce costs, and meet consumer needs.

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Support

If you are struggling with a concept or terminology in the course, you may contact **TelehealthSupport@capella.edu** for assistance.

If you are having technical issues, please contact **learningcoach@sophia.org**.