Exploring patient experiences of accessing psychological support through telehealth

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Presentation overview

- Brief introduction to what telehealth is
- Background research
- Telehealth in context of the study
- Findings
- Impact
What is telehealth?

“Telehealth refers to both the remote monitoring of people living with a chronic condition to support self-management and delivery of care, and the use of information and communication technology for remote consultation between health professionals or between a health professional and a patient e.g. providing health advice by telephone, videoconferencing to discuss a diagnosis, or capturing and sending images for diagnosis” (Rural Health Implementation Group, 2011)
Collie, Kreshka, Fernier, et al. (2007) provided psychosocial support to rural dwelling breast cancer patients using videoconferencing technology. Their findings demonstrated acceptability, feasibility and a significant decrease in depressive symptoms amongst their patients.

Olver, Brooksbank, Champion, et al. (2005) trialled videoconferencing in oncology to support rural patients and found increased frequency of patient-professional contact.

Whole Systems Demonstrator project (Newham, Kent and Cornwall)

Majority of research conducted in this field is overseas (Canada, Australia, USA)

Most projects are quantitative in nature and very few present a longitudinal perspective
Participants lived in three locations across Wales:

- Llandysul
- Llanidloes
- Ysbyty Ystwyth

Each participant provided with a laptop with secure VC software installed.

Access psychological support remotely from their own home from a health professional based in Bronglais hospital.
Research Design

• The study adopted a longitudinal qualitative design

• Multiple case studies approach

• 3 participants

• Each interviewed 3 times over a period of 3 months

• Semi-structured interviews

• Analysed using IPA
Findings

• Self-determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) postulates that humans have three inherent needs.

• Relatedness
• Autonomy
• Competence

• When one of the needs is thwarted it is expected that the person will experience passivity, ill-being, fragmentation and alienated functioning (Deci & Van Steenkiste, 2004).

• Participants made sense of their experience using telehealth as one which facilitated an environment where these needs can be met.
The need for relatedness concerns the universal wish for a person to feel connected to, interact with, and care for others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995)
• The need for competence concerns a person’s desire to be effectively able to deal with their environment or experience (White, 1959).

Diagram:
- Competence
  - Coping with perceived isolation
  - Reflective preparation
  - Mastery
  - Self-awareness
Autonomy

• The need for autonomy is associated with the need for an individual to be a causal agent and act within their own sense of values and self-concept (de Charms, 1968).
Why is this research important?

• Provides a good insight into the feasibility of the use of telehealth to access psychological support

• Demonstrates patient acceptability of telehealth

• Using telehealth as a platform for sessions did not DETRACT anything from usual care.

• Provides a theoretical insight into the role telehealth could play in satisfying patient needs.
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