



A College of Pharmacy Tele-Based Approach to Addressing Health Equity

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Xavier University Telehealth Center **XUTC**

Bottom Line

- Though the use of telehealth services were much lower prior to 2020, there was awareness around its importance in the delivery of healthcare¹
- As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, there has been an emphasis on providing care in a safe and socially distant manner and health care organizations are on the search for best practices²
- The College of Pharmacy announced the opening of the Xavier University Telehealth Center (XUTC) in January 2021 to provide remote clinical pharmacy services primarily for underserved areas and to provide hands-on learning opportunities for pharmacy students and residents.

Study Overview

Pharmacy schools have long provided tele-based services, specifically around medication therapy management (MTM), but there is now an opportunity to expand these offerings^{3,4}

Methods

In a response to current health care needs, the Xavier University Telehealth Center (XUTC) was established within the College of Pharmacy to provide chronic care management and remote patient monitoring to rural clinics in Louisiana that do not have access to a clinical pharmacist. In December 2020, clinic contracts were implemented with CareSouth Donaldsonville and Plaquemine (Louisiana) and the center began remotely seeing patients on a referral basis in January 2021. A HRSA grant was also awarded to aide in the purchase of diabetes and hypertension remote monitoring devices.

The Xavier University Telehealth Center (XUTC)

The mission of the Xavier University Telehealth Center (XUTC) is to expand the provision of pharmacist-led care management services to areas where there may not be immediate access to a clinical pharmacist. The Center also aims to function as a training site for pharmacy students and residents as well as serve as a resource to the New Orleans community and surrounding areas. The Center’s mission directly aligns with the College’s mission to “prepare pharmacists to impact medically underserved communities”. The development and management of this Center also reminds students of the university’s mission of “promoting a more just and humane society” by identifying a need and setting a plan in place to meet that need, in efforts to promote health equity

Services Rendered:

Telehealth Chronic Care Management
Medication Therapy Management (MTM)
Point of Care Testing

Staffing:

2 APPE students (every 6 weeks)
4 IPPE students (every semester)
Pharmacy resident (1 each semester)
2 research students
10 Medication Therapy Management Certificate Training Program students (each Spring)

Remote Monitoring Devices⁵:



iBlood Pressure ®



iGlucose ®

Preliminary Results

At the end of Year 1, several patients had engaged in at least one pharmacist encounter via phone or video for chronic care management or remote monitoring services. A portion of those patients also received follow up phone calls as needed. Patients reported appreciation for the medication education, a greater understanding for self monitoring, and the ease of communication provided.

Impact

The XUTC has expanded its reach and now serves as a member of the Louisiana Department of Health Diabetes Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes), providing clinical pharmacy services to rural clinics. Various additional relationships have also been established through the partnership. Pharmacy schools are uniquely positioned to play an important role in the trend towards improving health equity through telehealth. The XUTC will continue its quest of collaborating with rural clinics to identify best practices related to providing the most appropriate and meaningful form of pharmacist-led telehealth to meet patient and population needs.

References

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