



Effective Health Care

Telemedicine Services for Children

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Telemedicine services for children is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.

Topic Description

Nominator: Health care professional association

Nomination Summary: The nominator questions whether having access to telemedicine services (particularly in rural and underserved areas) improves healthcare access and outcomes for children. In addition, the nominator expresses an interest in the regulatory and liability issues posed by telemedicine services.

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Population(s): Children, adolescents, and young adults (aged 0-21 years)

Intervention(s): Services provided through telemedicine

Comparator(s): Standard in-person care

Outcome(s): Healthcare access, quality of care, cost

Key Questions from Nominator:

1. Does the availability of telemedicine services improve access to subspecialty care and address disparities in care for children who live in rural or underserved areas?
2. How can telemedicine services best be used to support the family-centered medical home?
3. How can telemedicine services improve the quality of pediatric care at the local and national levels?
4. What is the impact of telemedicine services on utilization, efficiency, and overall costs in pediatric healthcare?
5. To what degree is the variability in state licensing requirements a barrier to the provision of telemedicine services, and to what degree could overall quality of care be improved by coordinating interstate licensing for telemedicine?
6. Are there are other medical liability issues that serve as barriers to the use of telemedicine?

Considerations

- The topic meets Effective Health Care (EHC) Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)

- Children living in rural or underserved communities commonly have limited access to specialist care or other regionalized care. There is increased recognition that telemedicine can be effective in addressing access barriers for those living in remote or underserved communities and to enhance or expedite healthcare services, especially when constraints of time and distance are present.
- A literature scan yielded studies that cover multiple conditions or areas of pediatric medicine and include a variety of interventions with disease-specific outcomes that may not be compatible for direct comparisons or conclusions across conditions. Although there are some outcomes that are common across conditions, specific measurements for those outcomes are disease specific. This topic is not feasible for a full systematic review at this time given the heterogeneous conditions and outcomes included in available studies. In addition, the nominator's questions surrounding medical liability issues and variability in state licensing requirements are not within the scope of the EHC Program.