



Five Key Issues for Telemental Health Research with Underserved Populations

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**Future of Telehealth: Essential Tools and Technologies for
Clinical Research and Care**

**Session 4: Innovation networks for improving access and
quality in medically underserved areas**

Natcher Conference Center, NIH

June 26, 2009

Disclosures



I am solely responsible for the content of this presentation. This presentation is not intended to represent any official position, policy, endorsement or opinion of any of the organizations with which I am involved.

Telehealth Roles



- Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health, University of Colorado Denver
- Rural Native Veteran Domain Lead, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Rural Health's Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Western Region
- Subject Matter Expert and Psychological Health Portfolio, Telemedicine and Advance Technology Research Center (TATRC), USMRMC
- Board Member and Vice Chair of TMH SIG, American Telemedicine Association

Background



- Psychiatrist
- Involved in Telemental health services and evaluation
 - CAIANH, VA, UCD, DOD
- Population focus
 - Native
 - Rural
 - Veteran/Service Member

5 Key Issues for Telehealth Research



- Appropriate selection of research methodologies and targeting of efforts
- Greater emphasis in understanding how eHealth can change the models of care
- Understanding how eHealth can impact value in terms of access and quality
- Fostering collaborative models with underserved populations
- Adaptation of eHealth to underserved populations (programs and models)

State of Telemental Health research



- Clinical practice outpaces the research
- Focused on videoconferencing
- Growing body of outcome data

State of Telemental Health Research



- What is the appropriate level of evidence for which interventions? Does every intervention need an RCT?
- What are the most appropriate methodologies in telehealth?
- Are research networks realistic solutions?
- What is the role for mixed-methodologies?

Models of care



- Current clinical and research work focused on how eHealth adapts and augments current models of care delivery.
- How can eHealth change current models of care delivery?

What is medically underserved?



- Access vs. Isolation
- Care available and fit with population
- What is the relationship between access and quality ?

Improve Value



- Value = cost + quality
- Highest value = lowest cost + highest quality
- eHealth areas to improve value
 - Administrative efficiencies
 - Prevention
 - Extension
 - Clinical efficiencies

Logistical Rural Research Challenges



- Rural infrastructure, distance management
- Multiple collaborators and IRBS
- Travel and transportation issues
- Motivating participants
- Negotiating partnerships with communities

Community Research Perspectives



- Community skepticism
- Clinical needs and defined community benefit
- Adaptation for community/population
- Translation
- Conflicting agendas between researchers and communities

Community Research



- CBPR necessary but not sufficient
- How to design scientifically rigorous research within community-based settings?
- How to develop long-terms relationships with community/population partners of mutual benefit.
- Researcher becomes medium between research community and population

Adaptation to Specific Populations



- What needs to be studied?
 - General vs. specific
 - Programs vs. models/processes
- Necessary baseline population data for eHealth
- Translation

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