



**NCCN Virtual Oncology Fellows Program:
New Horizons in Quality Cancer Care™**

**Wednesday, March 17, 2021
12:40 PM – 1:10 PM EDT**

Telemedicine and Cancer Care: Lessons for the Future

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At conclusion of presentation the learner will be able to

- Review the benefits of telemedicine for cancer care
- Identify unique challenges and limitations that may arise with telemedicine
- Determine which patient encounters are appropriate for telemedicine

OUTLINE FOR DISCUSSION

Historical Perspective

Benefits and Application

Limitations

Regulatory

Documentation

Consenting

Patient, Provider Preparation

Appropriateness of Telemedicine Visit versus in Clinic

Clinical Trials

Potential Sustainable Use of Telemedicine Encounters

Historical Perspective

Telemedicine requires audio and visual

Telehealth “waiver”

Benefits and Application

Increased access to care in rural areas

No clinic person-to-person exposure of infectious agents

Minimizes travel and associated expense

Decreases no show rates

Ability to counsel patient in a “mask-free” encounter

Efficient communication of plan of care with multidiscipline input

Limitations

Quality of patient's internet service

Inability to conduct in-person physical examination

Patients that lack decision - making capacity

“Digital Divide”

May need the use of an interpreter for sign language or for those with limited English proficiency

Poverty

Not all support services will be available to the cancer patient

Regulatory

Licensure

Prescribing

Insurance

Regulatory: Licensure

All states allow the practice of telemedicine within the state the provider holds license.

The practice of cross-border telemedicine is restricted by licensure issues.

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.

VA providers can provide services across state lines.

Regulatory: Prescribing

- The Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act (2008).
- Prohibits delivery, distribution, or dispensing of a controlled substance by means of the internet without a ‘valid’ prescription.
- A ‘valid’ prescription must be predicated on an in-person evaluation by the prescribing practitioner.
- During the pandemic, exception granted to in-person requirement that applies during the declaration of a public health emergency.

Regulatory: Billing

State eligibility is typically more restrictive for new patients than established.

Each insurance company should be able to address expectations, documentation and billable services.

Consult the recent E/M documentation and coding rules that went into effect 1/1/21 regarding telemedicine services.

Additional Documentation

Indicate telemedicine encounter and person(s) in encounter

Why the telemedicine visit was appropriate instead of in-person visit

Patient location

Provider location

Format used: audio + video versus audio alone

If audio alone, document reason

Time expended

Consenting

A telemedicine consent should be obtained prior to any virtual encounter.

Written is preferable.

An oral consent if obtained must be documented.

Patient and Provider Preparation

Obtain consent and clarify with patient privacy expectations

Confirm technological requirements may be met

Choose a healthcare electronic platform that provides robust security

Silence pagers and cell phones, mute/defer notifications on computer

Provider Workspace Preparation

Position the video camera to permit eye contact with patient

Remove distracting items in background

Position lighting to highlight your face

Laptop or desktop computer preferred over mobile device

If using a mobile device secure it in a fixed position

Use separate computer screens for EMR and patient encounter

Headset with headphones and a microphone are desirable

Ensure privacy

During the Encounter

Speak slowly and pause frequently to allow delays in transmission

Confirm patient's physical location

Inquire about other participants

Physical Examination

Patient may self report BP and pulse utilizing home monitors in addition to weight

Resources exist that provide general principles to the telemedicine examination:

A Guide for a Patient Assisted Virtual Physical Examination

How to Administer a Virtual Physical Examination

The Telemedicine Musculoskeletal Examination

A Reliable, Remote, Polyneuropathy Exam

Appropriateness of Telemedicine Visit versus in Clinic

ASCO guidelines recommend adoption of telemedicine visits for patients not requiring a
physical exam
treatment
or in-office diagnostics

Clinical Trial Participation

Barrier to enrollment and ongoing participation

Many programs have halted enrollment for certain clinical trials

Reduction in the launch of new trials

FDA published guidance for sponsors and study sites

Potential Sustainable Use of Telemedicine Encounters

Symptom management triage

Treatment adherence

Survivorship

Palliative care

Genetic counseling

Support services

Introduction of potential clinical trial participation

Patient education

REFERENCES

- National Cancer Comprehensive Network [NCCN] COVID 19 Resources: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Resources for the Cancer Care Community

Recorded Webinars:

NCCN Best Practices Webinar Series: Creative Strategies Implemented during Covid-19 that Will Impact the Future of Cancer Care:

Clinical Implications of Telemedicine for Cancer Care

Policy and Reimbursement Considerations for Telemedicine

Modifications in Cancer Treatment and Delivery

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- Center for Connected Health Policy. State telehealth laws and reimbursement policies. 2020. https://www.cchpca.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/CCHP_%2050_STATE_REPORT_SPRING_2020_FINAL.pdf.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Medicare telemedicine health care provider fact sheet. <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-telemedicine-health-care-provider-fact-sheet>.
- FDA Guidance on Conduct of Clinical Trials of Medical Products During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/fda-guidance-conduct-clinical-trials-medical-products-during-covid-19-public-health-emergency>

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- Drug Enforcement Administration, Diversion Control Division. COVID-19 information page. US Department of Justice. https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/coronavirus.html?inf_contact_key=410e6a45f5ef27deb85e6b6a8b284664.
- ASCO:
 - A Guide to Cancer Care Delivery During The COVID-19 Pandemic
 - Private Payers: Telemedicine and Telehealth
 - Meg Barbor: Building Improved and Sustainable Health-Care Systems Through Telemedicine-The ASCO Post. <https://ascopost.com/issues/November-25-2018/building-improved-and-sustainable-health-care-systems-through-telemedicine> .
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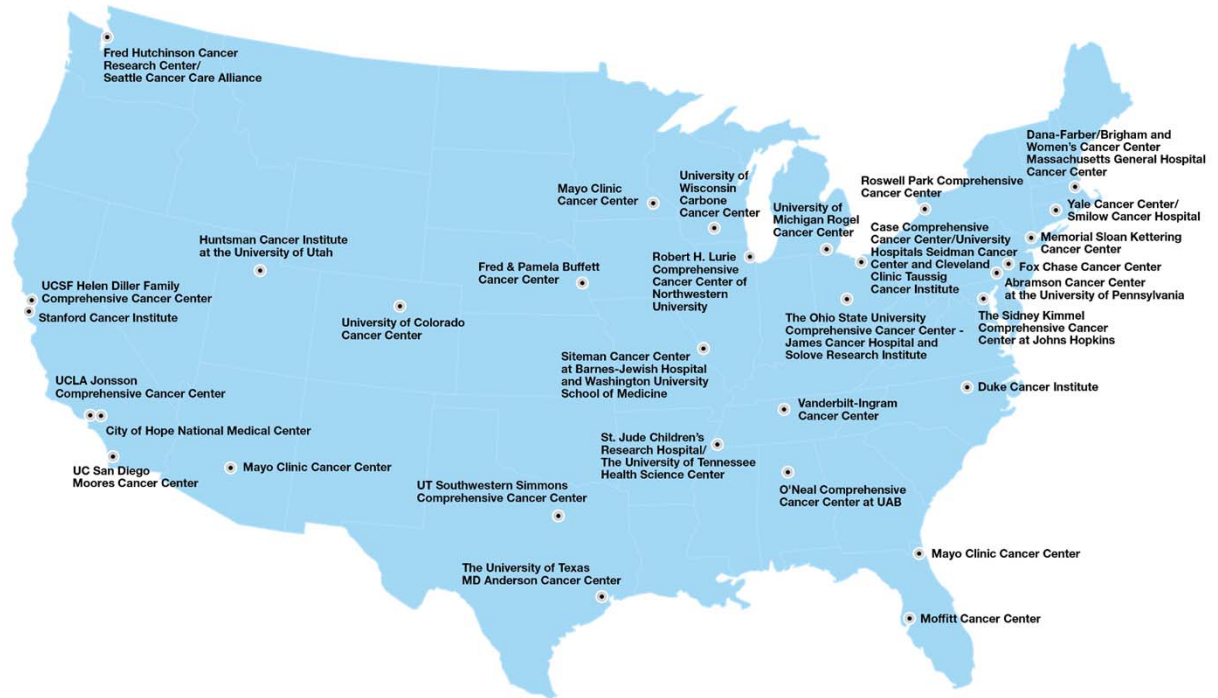
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