Telehealth Outcomes in Dermatology Match In-Person Care

Telemedicine has a lot to offer for treatment of common dermatologic conditions according to a study completed by the Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California. In fact, a group who completed treatment for psoriasis via telemedicine reported on par or improved outcomes when compared to the control group for the same diagnoses. Telemedicine was indicated to meet the standard for in-person care, and it presents solutions to shortages of dermatologists and care gaps throughout the country.

Two Groups Provide Considerable Insight

Three hundred people were sorted into two different groups: telemedicine and in-person care. For those who participated in the telemedicine program, the focus was on reducing the time to care by providing images to the physicians rather than treating the patient with an office visit. The type of care and the access to the physician was shifted to a different entry point than the traditional care model and even some more common [telemedicine solutions](https://www.mendfamily.com/look-telemedicine-platform/). The telemedicine patients were evaluated based on images and both groups participated in standardized clinical assessments that were compared.

Asynchronous Care For Better Outcomes

The study completed by the Keck School utilized asynchronous telemedicine rather than live-video. The patient’s symptoms were documented via image and forwarded to a physician for review at a later time. The provider would then review the images from the secure upload and provide a diagnosis or treatment plan. The information was either uploaded by the patient or the patient’s primary physician who would then receive an update with the diagnoses and treatment plan recommendation.

Sample Specific

Patients with psoriasis were invited to participate in the program. Researchers were able to compare disease severity and symptoms over all patients. They evaluated patients with the Patient Global Assessment scale to review the patient’s perception of their illness as well as the efficacy of treatment that was provided. They also used tools specific to psoriasis and dermatologic illness to verify improvement as well as initial severity.

Fewer Symptoms Overall

Potentially the most important outcome from the study was a reported reduction in symptoms for patients in the telemedicine group. Those who received the remote care reported lower perceived severity than those who presented in person. Though the difference was slight, there was a trend toward an overall reduction on complaints for those who were treated via telemedicine. Outcomes for patients in the telemedicine group were comparable or improved overall to those who received in-person care.

Low Acuity Patients Seen In A Snap

The ease of use telemedicine solutions can make near immediate treatment a reality for patients in several different stages of care. Asynchronous file sharing allows patients and providers to share images of dermatologic illness for multiple purposes. Providers can share images for consult to determine the acuity of the issue. Patients can receive treatment for minor complaints, and providers can reserve office hours for patients with more severe diagnoses that require in-person evaluation.

A Few Clicks Away From Asynchronous Solutions

By working with a solution that specializes in telemedicine and ease-of-use for all parties, dermatologists can make getting information, providing diagnoses and communicating as simple as a few clicks. Mend offers drag and drop solutions for asynchronous telemedicine that can handle high resolution images from patients, providers and third parties. Our automated forms can allow parties to upload images directly to their patient paperwork, and information can be provided by multiple parties. For more information on how your organization can utilize Mend’s suite of asynchronous and live-video telemedicine tools, request a demo above. A workflow and implementation specialist can help you design a customized solution to meet your needs.