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A 12-month randomized controlled trial to assess the impact of telemedicine on patient experience and care continuity

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Background: Telemedicine is the use of electronic information to communicate technologies to provide and support healthcare when distance separates the participants. Satisfaction and engagement of patients are key resource indicators for any healthcare setup and healthcare provider for evolving the care continuum (a system that provides a comprehensive range of health services so that care can evolve with the patient over time) and ensuring continuous quality improvement in the systems. As the latest remarkable strategy to connect with patients for consultations and follow-up, telemedicine has been of pivotal importance, especially during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), where medicinal services utilize digital sound, video, and information interchanges to remotely access and provide care.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional study was planned during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic from April 2021 to April 2022 to assess the impact of telemedicine in essential healthcare delivery by super specialty tertiary care healthcare setup, which is also a medical college, by three consultants and a physiotherapist.

Results: There was a significant improvement in satisfaction scores and an improvement in the approach of patients towards telemedicine was observed. Various other parameters, like readmission compliance with medications and a reduction in ED times, were also observed. Finally, clinical endpoints were captured, and the correlation between readmission and medicine adherence was found to be strongly correlated ($r = 0.9$). A p-value of the reduction in utilization times of ED (emergency department), readmission, and medicine adherence was found to be highly significant.

Conclusions: Telemedicine is the need of the hour and is now an essential part of healthcare. Its acceptance post-COVID-19 pandemic and adaptability into existing healthcare setups would deliver fruitful results.

Biography

Ruchi Garg, an Associate Professor at AIIMS Jodhpur, has demonstrated exceptional leadership and innovation in the field of hospital administration and healthcare management. With a career marked by a commitment to improving operational efficiency, patient care, and safety, she led numerous initiatives that have had a profound impact on AIIMS Jodhpur's performance and reputation

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