Teledentistry: Creating a Stronger and More Proficient Communication Between Dentists and ED Physicians at LVHN?

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**BACKGROUND**

- Telemedicine is the use of technology to communicate and exchange clinical information between two providers for diagnosis and consultations.
- Many departments at LVHN (TeleDerm, TelePsych, TeleBurn) have successfully implemented it into their departments.
- The implementation of dental technology at LVHN will alleviate miscommunication between departments at the hospital.
- The technology will aid in potential transfer cases from outside network facilities.
- Teledentistry will create a better and more proficient communication between the ED physicians and dentists that are on-call to treat dental emergencies (Fig 1).
- Dentists will be able to assess and triage the patient immediately (Fig 2).
- Treatment time will be reduced and there will be more immediate direct care.
- A pilot program will start at Cedar Crest, Muhlenberg, and 17th & Chew St.

**METHODS**

- Understand current system for dental emergencies
- Understand how other departments at LVHN use Telemedicine (i.e. TeleBurn)
- Look at implications and differences from other departments that use Telemedicine (the need for special cameras vs. phone)
- Figure out benefits and challenges for both ED and dental department (Fig 4)
- Talk to TeleHealth services committee to build plan for implementation
- Look for ideal hardware (i.e. camera systems) to suit hospitals needs: price, ease of use, integration into EPIC (Fig 3)
- Expand to other LVHN campus’s and implement in Miles of Smiles dental van

**PROJECT OUTLOOK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Faster care and faster disposition time</td>
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<td>Real time interaction between patient, ER resident and dental resident (triage)</td>
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<td>Educational for ED from dental perspective</td>
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<td>Easy outreach to community</td>
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<td>Convenient oral evaluations without dentists driving to all campus's</td>
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<td>Saves money</td>
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<td>Appointment efficiencies for clinic</td>
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<td>Enable earlier diagnosis</td>
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<td>Avoid dental neglect</td>
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<td>Level of confidentiality</td>
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<td>Technological issues, image resolution/connectivity</td>
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<td>Efficiency of camera use depending on how many cameras are purchased</td>
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<td>Reimbursement issues</td>
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<td>Time it takes to train and implement both emergency room physicians and dentists</td>
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**FUTURE DIRECTION**

- Train the dental residents and ED residents to use the camera and teach them the appropriate time to implement
- Find a way to facilitate integration into EPIC
- Incorporate into Miles of Smiles traveling dental van
- Prospective study on success once implemented
- Gather data to support the benefits of Teledentistry at the hospital
  - There is limited access to dental emergency data because there is no record of total dental emergency inflow and how it was communicated to dental resident on call.
- Determine whether the implementation of Teledentistry created a stronger and more proficient communication between dentists and ED physicians

**REFERENCES**


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