

Antenatal Telehealth in COVID-19: provider and patient experience

Monique Hamilton

Introduction:

- Rapid development and expansion of telehealth in antenatal care during coronavirus pandemic
- Aim: summarise the literature reporting the satisfaction levels of patients and healthcare providers utilising telehealth for antenatal care.

Methods:

- PubMed online database search
- MESH terms: telehealth, COVID19, coronavirus, antenatal, prenatal, obstetric
- Inclusion criteria:
 - Studies reporting on patient and/or healthcare provider satisfaction of telehealth used in antenatal setting during coronavirus pandemic
 - English language
 - Published in peer reviewed journal
- Narrative synthesis to summarize and report findings.

Results:

- Two studies met inclusion from the 55 search results (at 27/9/2020)
- Madden et al¹ surveyed physician experience of delivery of video-based antenatal care
 - Survey of 36 providers that delivered 1352 telehealth (video platform) MFM and general obstetric visits
 - Setting: 5 week period at Columbia University affiliate practices in NYC during coronavirus pandemic
 - 97% believed telehealth increased access for patients
 - Majority: convenient for patients and practice, would continue to use in the future, quality of care unchanged, rapport unchanged
 - Minorities: significant challenges during implementation, needed significant tech support
 - Mixed: perception of impact of duration of visit and time spent documenting
 - Semi-structured interview with 11 respondents – providers reported on their interpretation of patient experience – poor design, should be repeated to directly interview patients

- Holcomb et al² surveyed patients regarding their satisfaction with antenatal care delivered by telehealth
 - 283 patients responded (431 invited) who experienced audio-only virtual visits for antenatal care
 - Setting: 2 month period in County health system in Dallas Texas during coronavirus pandemic.
 - Majority: overall good or very good
 - <1% technical difficulty, 3% needs not met by virtual visit
 - Majority felt mix of in-person and virtual ideal
 - Favourable aspects of virtual: decreased need to transport, decreased time away from work, decreased childcare assistance, greater ability to attend appointments.

Conclusion:

- Very limited published literature reporting on healthcare provider of patient response to telehealth antenatal care during coronavirus pandemic, despite widespread use
- Important for institutions to audit and publish responses to their telehealth models – share outcomes and learnings
- Scope for on-going use of telehealth models particularly interesting for regional and remote Australians

