

REHAB SUMMIT

503: Telehealth: Start Now to Incorporate Virtual Therapy into Your Existing Practice

Tracey Davis, MOT, OTR/L

#RehabSummit #RHSummit #VirtualSummit

f #RehabSummit t #RHSummit i #VirtualSummit

To comply with professional boards/associations standards:

- I declare that I (or my family) do not have a financial relationship in any amount, occurring in the last 12 months with a commercial interest whose products or services are discussed in my presentation. Additionally, all planners involved do not have any financial relationship.
- Requirements for successful completion are attendance for the full session along with a completed session evaluation.
- PESI and all current accreditation statuses does not imply endorsement of any commercial products displayed in conjunction with this activity.

503: Telehealth: Start Now to Incorporate Virtual Therapy into Your Existing Practice

Tracey Davis, MOT, OTR/L

Financial: Tracey Davis is the owner of Global Therapy Consultants. She has an employment relationship with Growing Healthy Children Therapy Services; and Nationwide Children's Hospital. Ms. Davis receives a speaking honorarium from PESI, Inc.

Non-financial: Tracey Davis is a member of the American Occupational Therapy Association.

WHAT IS TELEHEALTH?

- ◆ Service Delivery Model - falls within current scope of practice for both OT, ST and PT (Brennan et al, 2010)
- ◆ Can include any service that uses some sort of telecommunication or technology as part of session
- ◆ Synchronous - real time
- ◆ Asynchronous - store and forward technology

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEFINITION

- ❖ Identified by AOTA in 2011 as an emerging niche
- ❖ Defined in 2013 position paper (latest revision 2018) as a service delivery model that uses telecommunication and technology (AOTA, 2013)
- "the application of evaluative, consultative, preventative, and therapeutic services delivered through information and communication technology (AOTA, 2018)"

PHYSICAL THERAPY DEFINITION

- 2012 position paper Physical Therapy defined telehealth as "the use of electronic communications to provide and deliver a host of health-related information and health care services, including, but not limited to physical therapy-related information and services, over large and small distances." (APTA, 2012)

SPEECH THERAPY DEFINITION

- **Telepractice** is the application of telecommunications technology to the delivery of speech language pathology and audiology professional services at a distance by linking clinician to client or clinician to clinician for assessment, intervention, and/or consultation

AMERICAN TELEMEDICINE ASSOCIATION

- ❖ Telerehab Special Interest Group
- ❖ Created Blueprint for Telerehabilitation Guidelines (Brennan et al., 2010); updated in 2017 as American Telemedicine Association's Principles for Delivering Telerehabilitation Services (Richmond et al., 2017)
- ❖ Good information on definitions and best practice across rehab disciplines, and the basis from which other organizations created their own position papers

CENTER FOR CONNECTED HEALTH POLICY

- Telehealth regulations for all 50 states
- Describes current legislation
- Encompasses all of telemedicine, not only telerehab
- State Telehealth Laws and Reimbursement Policies: A Comprehensive Scan of the 50 States and District of Columbia (updated twice yearly)

www.cchpca.org

CURRENT RESEARCH

- ❖ Bini, S., & Mahajan, J. (2016). Clinical outcomes of remote asynchronous telerehabilitation are equivalent to traditional therapy following total knee arthroplasty: A randomized control study. *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*. 0(0), 1-9. doi:10.1177/1357633x16634518
- ❖ Compared traditional live physical therapy vs store and forward technology
- ❖ Results were not statistically different between the groups

CURRENT RESEARCH

- ❖ Lindgren, S., Wacker, D., Suess, A., Schieltz, K., Pelzel, K., Kopelman, T., Lee, J., Romani, P., & Waldron, D. (2016). Telehealth and autism: Treating challenging behavior at lower cost. *Pediatrics*, 137(Supplement), S167-S175. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-2851o>
- ❖ Cost is always a hot topic for insurance and other agencies
- ❖ Study found cost savings and higher client satisfaction

CURRENT RESEARCH

- Galloway, M., Marsden, D., Callister, R., Milson, M., Erickson, K., & English, C. (2019). The feasibility of a telehealth exercise program aimed at increasing cardiorespiratory fitness for people after stroke. *International Journal of Telerehabilitation*, 11(2), 9-28. <https://doi.org/10.5195/ijt.2019.6290>
- Not only was feasibility high for this population group, but favorability ratings were high as well. Parameters established included 3x/week, 20-30 mins/session, for 6-12 weeks.

THAT'S GREAT! BUT WILL "THEY"
PAY?

Burning Questions Answered...

INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

- Pre-pandemic
 - No Medicare Reimbursement
 - Some Medicaid
 - Some Private Insurance
 - Parity laws highly variable by state
- Pioneers include VA, Tricare

INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

- Currently
 - Medicare will cover OT,PT, Speech
 - Medicaid has expanded significantly
 - Caveat[®] some of this expansion has been through emergency and temporary measures that are set to expire
 - Private Insurance has also expanded

RESOURCES TO CONSULT

- Center for Connected Health Policy: <https://www.cchpca.org/telehealth-policy/current-state-laws-and-reimbursement-policies/>
- American Telemedicine Association: <https://www.americantelemed.org/covid-19/>
- ASHA, APTA, AOTA
- State Boards

Many providers use a cash based system and provide a superbill to clients for reimbursement

Modifier 59

Modifier GT, GQ

Location Code 02

ETHICS AND MORE

Just because I CAN do it doesn't mean I SHOULD

FIRST UP, LICENSURE

- License in BOTH state of residence and state of practice
- Some precedence for providing services to an established patient if they are temporarily out of state
 - Must check with state board
- Some of these regulations have been relaxed for the pandemic but it is unclear if they will remain so

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- Many countries have their own licensure laws regarding provision of services
- It is up to you as provider to be familiar with these laws and comply
 - If a country regulates licensure, then you as provider MUST be licensed in that country to legally provide services
- Resources
 - World Federation of Occupational Therapy (www.wfot.org)
 - World Confederation for Physical Therapy (www.wcpt.org)
 - World Association of Speech-Language Pathology (www.waslp.com)

AND FINALLY, CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS WITH FIDELITY

- How can you see all you need to see?
- What about standardized testing?
- I work in the schools; does this count to qualify a student?
- Will insurance accept a virtual evaluation?

ANSWER TO ALL OF THE ABOVE:

IT DEPENDS

VIRTUAL EVALUATIONS
PROCEED WITH CAUTION



PANDEMIC CHANGES

- Explicit guidance created for certain standardized assessments
- Relaxed rules in some states regarding the need for in person evaluations before telehealth can begin
- Testing materials in digital format more readily available

BEST PRACTICE LANGUAGE WHEN CONDUCTING VIRTUAL EVALUATIONS

"These assessments have not been standardized for telehealth; however results are thought to be representative of client's current level of function."

"Client was evaluated via a telehealth service delivery model using a secure and compliant video connection. Informed consent was obtained prior to the evaluation."

RESOURCES

- Pearson: <https://www.pearsonassessments.com>
- WPS: <https://www.wpspublish.com>
- ATP: <https://www.academictherapy.com>
- National Associations

LET'S TALK PRIVACY

- HIPAA regulations have relaxed during the pandemic, but if you can comply, you should
- Platforms
- Messaging
- Emails

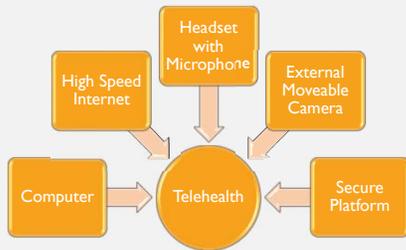
SIGN ME UP!

In Other Words... Now What?

FIRST STEPS

- Set yourself up for success
- Know your client
- Preparation is key
- Have a backup plan
- But most of all: **Trust Your Instincts**

MINIMUM EQUIPMENT



LUXURY ITEMS

- ❖ Second Monitor: Improves productivity, high value for the money
- ❖ Organization system: Worthwhile if practicing independently full time
- ❖ Dedicated work space: Quiet, uncluttered space is necessary, separate office is useful
- ❖ Therapy and evaluation materials: Can use household materials but will want a few specialty items
- ❖ Document Camera: useful for evaluations, or if you often need to show tabletop work

A WORD ABOUT HIPAA COMPLIANCE

- HIPAA standards have been relaxed due to the current pandemic
- However, it is best practice to follow guidelines as closely as possible
 - Not all platforms are created equal: if you can afford full HIPAA compliance now, it will save a headache later switching to a more compliant platform
- Skype, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts were not HIPAA compliant before, but may be now
 - The difference is that you must have a signed BAA for HIPAA compliance

PLATFORM OPTIONS

Vsee: Barebones. Uses half the bandwidth of Skype (ideal for those with slower internet speeds)

Zoom: Free or low cost, Highly capable and intuitive

Adobe Connect: More capability, higher cost, some companies have built customized platforms from this base

Blackboard and Blackboard Ultra: High cost, but mainstream in videoconferencing world

Doxy.me: basic option with just video, subscription based that includes HIPAA secure screen sharing and messaging

Blue Jay Engage: Hybrid between synchronous and asynchronous technology

Theranest: All in one system, telehealth option is an add on. Subscription is by client, not therapist

PLATFORM OPTIONS

Theraplatform: All in one tool, some reports of video being glitchy and poor customer service

Bluejeans: Fairly basic platform, low priced. Cannot confirm HIPAA compliance on website

Simple Practice: All in one tool. Telehealth is an add on feature.

Simple Visit: Made more for medicine, includes marketing and administrative support, expensive

Blink Session: All in one tool, resources can be uploaded or purchased within the app.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

For Business:

- HushMail: HIPAA compliant mail system
- Klara: HIPAA secure messaging
- Nota: Notes, records, invoicing, intake forms

For Activities:

- Some platforms include activities within the system
- Other platforms include asynchronous options such as messaging, accounts to send instructions, etc
- Still other platforms allow for you to screenshare and give remote control access to your client

FEE STRUCTURES

- ❖ Insurance reimbursement
 - ❖ WIDELY variable and continuously changing
- ❖ Superbill
 - ❖ More sure because you collect money up front and place responsibility on the client to seek reimbursement.
 - ❖ Clients might need to advocate for reimbursement by citing a state's parity laws
- ❖ Private Pay Only
 - ❖ Most flexible but slowest growth
 - ❖ Be prepared to cash flow until reputation spreads

IDEAS TO GET STARTED

- Work off your existing client base
 - When everything goes back to "normal", which clients could stay with telehealth?
- Go through your caseload right now and take note of ideal candidates
 - Technologically savvy, or has someone with them who is
 - Motivated by technology
 - Responds to visual and verbal cues
 - Supportive caregivers
 - Compromised immune system
 - Lives in an area with bad weather

IDEAS TO GET STARTED

- Create a hybrid situation
 - Decrease in person visits and replace with virtual visits
- Create a list of ideal hybrid candidates
 - Orthopedic needs
 - Clients who need to conserve energy
 - Clients nearing discharge

IDEAS TO GET STARTED

- Go all in!
 - Employees: speak with your employer about building a telehealth arm of the practice, market to doctors as exclusive services
 - Practice Owners: use the knowledge you have gained in the past few months to build a practice from scratch, first as a side hustle and gradually shifting to the main gig
 - Market the convenience, highlight the ideal candidate, and spread the word to schools, early intervention programs, rehab facilities, home health agencies, etc.
 - Get active in groups and network

IDEAS TO GET STARTED

- Not ready to go all in? Contract with a telehealth agency
- Most telehealth companies do school based services, but some see adults as well
- This is a good way to get your feet wet part time, as well as save the hassle of billing, finding a platform, etc.

YOUR BURNING QUESTIONS, ANSWERED HERE

What are you dying to know??

HOW DO I ADDRESS ATTENTION?

The same way you would for in person services. Build rapport, find what motivates the client, and reinforce behavior you want to see.

Enlist caregiver help, if necessary

Build in break times

SPEAKING OF RAPPORT, HOW DO I DO THAT?

Be intentional

Give virtual tours

Ask detailed questions and take great notes

WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

Teach safety to both client and caregiver

Have the client use a tablet to show you around their house

Simulate tasks until client is safe to complete actual skills

IS IT ETHICAL TO USE THE CAREGIVER TO COMPLETE THERAPEUTIC TASKS

View telehealth in the same way as home health or early intervention

Teach the caregiver the skills they will need for carryover

Start every session by evaluating the quality of the task completion, making adjustments as necessary

WHAT IF THERE IS NO CAREGIVER?

If a caregiver is required to access the session, then there must be a caregiver present

If you as therapist have a safety concern, then there must be a caregiver present

End of Story

WHAT SHOULD I CHARGE FOR A TELEHEALTH SESSION?

What are you worth as a skilled clinician?

Charge that.

Telehealth services are no different than in person services. This is a service delivery model, with outcomes equal to or greater than in person sessions. You still need to use your clinical skills to provide quality services, and you should be compensated fairly for those skills, regardless of the delivery format.

HOW DO I KNOW IF TELEHEALTH IS RIGHT FOR SOMEONE?

Is the client interested and motivated?

Can you problem solve through his or her needs?

Try telehealth and see what happens.

WHAT IF MY [BOSS, CLIENT, ETC] IS RESISTANT TO TELEHEALTH?

Be empathetic

Show rather than tell

Listen and solve

YOUR TURN – QUESTION TIME

tdavis@talkpathlive.com

Continuing Education Credits

Access the Rehab Summit Evaluation on August 1st:

- An email will be sent to your registered email address
- An evaluation link will also be available on RehabSummit.com

Once you have completed the evaluation, you can choose to print, download, or email the certificate for your records.



#RehabSummit #RHSummit #VirtualSummit

f #RehabSummit t #RHSummit i #VirtualSummit
