

The Impact of Telehealth in Advanced Nursing Practice: Expanding Access to Care

Harold Ann*

Department of Nursing, University of Omaha, 6001 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68182, USA

Introduction

Telehealth, the use of technology to deliver healthcare services remotely, has emerged as a transformative force in the field of advanced nursing practice. With the ever-evolving landscape of healthcare, telehealth presents a unique opportunity to break down barriers to access and deliver quality care to patients regardless of geographical location. This article explores the significant impact of telehealth in advanced nursing practice and how it is expanding access to care for individuals and communities. One of the most notable benefits of telehealth in advanced nursing practice is its ability to reach patients in remote or underserved areas. Geographical barriers, such as limited access to healthcare facilities, transportation challenges, and distance from specialized services, can significantly impede patients' ability to seek timely and appropriate care. Telehealth bridges this gap by enabling APNs to provide consultations, assessments, and follow-ups remotely, bringing much-needed healthcare services directly to the patients' doorstep [1].

In many regions, access to specialty care can be limited, leading to long waiting times for patients requiring specialized consultations. Telehealth allows APNs to collaborate with other healthcare providers, specialists, and interdisciplinary teams in real-time, enhancing access to specialty care without the need for extensive travel. This approach ensures that patients receive timely and expert guidance, leading to improved health outcomes. Chronic diseases often require continuous monitoring and management, which can be challenging for patients living in remote areas or with limited mobility. Through telehealth, APNs can engage in remote patient monitoring, conduct regular check-ins, and adjust treatment plans as needed. This proactive approach to chronic disease management helps prevent complications, reduces hospital readmissions, and empowers patients to take an active role in their healthcare.

Description

The impact of telehealth in mental health care has been particularly significant. Many individuals, especially those in rural or isolated communities, face barriers to accessing mental health services. Telehealth offers a private and convenient platform for APNs to provide counseling, therapy, and support to patients in the comfort of their homes. This approach reduces the stigma surrounding mental health care and encourages more individuals to seek help for their emotional well-being. Telehealth platforms provide a space for APNs to educate patients on their health conditions, medications, and self-management strategies. With the ability to share educational materials, videos, and personalized care plans, telehealth empowers patients to take charge of their health and engage in self-care effectively. Telehealth enables APNs to remotely monitor patients with chronic conditions or those recovering from surgeries or hospitalizations. Connected health devices and wearable technology can transmit vital signs, medication adherence, and other health data to the APN, allowing timely interventions and preventing complications [2].

**Address for Correspondence:* Harold Ann, Department of Nursing, University of Omaha, 6001 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68182, USA, E-mail: Haroldann@gmail.com

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In perinatal and pediatric care, telehealth has proved invaluable, especially for expectant mothers and families living in remote locations. APNs can conduct virtual prenatal consultations, postnatal follow-ups, and provide parenting support through telehealth platforms, ensuring that mothers and infants receive comprehensive care throughout their journey. Health disparities and inequities persist in various communities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations. Telehealth has the potential to address these disparities by providing equitable access to healthcare services for all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status, geographical location, or physical ability. This is especially crucial in improving health outcomes and reducing healthcare disparities in marginalized communities [3].

During public health emergencies or natural disasters, traditional healthcare systems July face overwhelming demands. Telehealth offers a flexible and scalable solution to deliver essential healthcare services to those in need, ensuring that critical care is available when it is most needed. Telehealth has revolutionized advanced nursing practice by expanding access to care and breaking down barriers that once hindered healthcare delivery. Through telehealth platforms, APNs can reach patients in remote and underserved areas, provide specialty care and chronic disease management, support mental health care, and engage in patient education and self-management. Additionally, telehealth facilitates home health monitoring, perinatal and pediatric care, and plays a pivotal role in promoting health equity and responding to public health emergencies.

As technology continues to advance and telehealth becomes more integrated into healthcare systems, the impact of telehealth in advanced nursing practice will continue to grow. Embracing this innovative approach not only enhances patient care but also fosters a patient-centered and accessible healthcare environment for individuals and communities worldwide. By harnessing the potential of telehealth, APNs can play a vital role in shaping the future of healthcare and contributing to improved health outcomes for all. Telehealth has become an essential tool in ensuring continuity of care for patients. When faced with unforeseen circumstances, such as inclement weather, transportation disruptions, or unexpected closures of healthcare facilities, telehealth offers a seamless alternative for patients to maintain contact with their APNs. This continuity of care helps prevent treatment disruptions and ensures that patients receive the support and guidance they need, even during challenging times [4].

Telehealth facilitates interprofessional collaboration by enabling APNs to connect with other healthcare professionals, such as physicians, pharmacists, social workers, and physical therapists, in real-time. This collaboration promotes coordinated and patient-centered care, allowing for effective communication and shared decision-making in the management of complex health conditions. Telehealth has the potential to reduce healthcare costs for both patients and healthcare systems. By eliminating the need for travel, reducing hospital readmissions, and preventing unnecessary emergency room visits, telehealth helps decrease the overall healthcare expenses. Additionally, telehealth consultations often require fewer resources than in-person visits, making it a cost-effective option for patients and providers alike. As technology continues to shape various aspects of modern life, the integration of telehealth in advanced nursing practice aligns with the demands of a digital era. Embracing telehealth not only positions APNs at the forefront of innovative healthcare delivery but also ensures that they remain relevant and adaptable in an ever-evolving healthcare landscape. Telehealth has the potential to address health disparities by reaching underserved communities and individuals who July have previously faced challenges in accessing healthcare. Through telehealth initiatives, APNs can actively work towards reducing disparities in healthcare outcomes and enhancing health equity. As with any healthcare technology, ensuring the privacy and security of patient data is paramount. APNs and healthcare organizations must adhere to strict data protection regulations and use secure telehealth platforms to safeguard patient information [5].

Conclusion

The impact of telehealth in advanced nursing practice cannot be overstated. It has transformed the way healthcare services are delivered, making quality care more accessible to individuals and communities worldwide. By overcoming geographical barriers, improving access to specialty care, supporting chronic disease management, and promoting mental health care, telehealth has become an invaluable tool in the APNs' toolkit. As the healthcare industry continues to embrace technology and telehealth advancements, APNs play a pivotal role in ensuring that patient-centered care remains at the forefront of these developments. By continuing to advocate for telehealth integration, addressing challenges related to technology adoption, and promoting equitable access to telehealth services, APNs can help shape a future where telehealth becomes an integral part of healthcare delivery, improving health outcomes and enhancing the overall patient experience. Embracing telehealth as a transformative force, APNs are poised to drive positive change in healthcare and continue making a meaningful impact in the lives of patients they serve.

Acknowledgement

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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