Can You Hear Me Now?! A Palliative Care Telehealth Approach to Caring for Heart Failure Patients (SA511)

Christopher Kearney, MD, MedStar Health, Baltimore, MD
Kathryn Walker, PharmD, MedStar Health, Baltimore, MD
Rene Mayo, MSW LSWA, MedStar Health, Baltimore, MD

Objectives

- Discuss the process of integrating mobile tablet technology into caring for palliative heart failure patients after hospital discharge.
- Describe the clinical intervention using the tablet and how the patient will interface with the team from home.
- Discuss outcomes related to the use of technology in this setting.

We often lose the connection with our patients after spending a lot of time connecting with them during their inpatient stay. To prevent this lapse in care, we will describe how we harnessed the power of “telehealth” to redefine the boundaries of our team and provide effective and efficient patient care outside the walls of our hospital. Through the smart and appropriate use of mobile technologies, we aimed to improve patient/provider communication, facilitate a comprehensive approach to medication management, and enhance patient self-care education in a target population of urban-dwelling patients with advanced heart and lung failure admitted to our academic community hospital. After receiving a palliative care consultation in the hospital, wireless tablets were deployed to the homes of palliative care patients for 2 months. This allowed videoconferencing between patients and the palliative team after discharge, and the tablet was preconfigured with apps designed to facilitate personalized medication management, clinical and health status monitoring (e.g., medication adverse event reporting, symptom diaries), and patient education (e.g., resources relevant to the patient’s health status and condition). This project represents collaboration between palliative care, home health, and telehealth to extend palliative care outside the walls of the hospital and provide continuity of care.