Telehealth: It’s not new, but it’s time

What is telehealth?

“[T]he use of electronic information and communications technologies to provide and support health care delivery by connecting patients and health care providers who are separated by long distances” (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2006)

Why telehealth?

• Provides information over distance
• Improves access to care, especially in rural areas
• Lowers cost of care
• Facilitates collaboration and communication
  — Patient-centered medical home

Telemedicine/Telehealth/Health Information Technology

• “Telemedicine” is the use of medical information exchanged from one site to another via electronic communications to improve patients’ health status (American Telemedicine Association)
• “Telehealth” is often used to encompass a broader definition of remote healthcare that does not always involve clinical services
• “Health IT” refers even more broadly to information services

Telehealth/Health IT technologies

• Telecommunications
  − Videoconferencing
  − Transmission of still images
  − Electronic communication
• Electronic instruments
  − Vital signs (e.g., stethoscope)
  − Images (e.g., high-res camera)
• Electronic health records
  − Data sharing
• Mobile devices

Applications of telehealth

• Remote consultations
  − Real time
  − Asynchronous
• Specialist referral services
• Remote patient monitoring
• Medication management
• Home health
Today’s panelists

• Rex Gantenbein, PhD, UW Center for Rural Health Research and Education
• Dean Bartholomew, MD, Platte Valley Medical Clinic
• Carol (Charly) Sednek, MS, FNP-C, Cheyenne Veterans Administration Medical Center
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