

Perceptions Of Telehealth Among Healthcare Professionals During The Covid-19 Pandemic Era In X Hospital

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ABSTRACT

Telehealth is the delivery of health services, where patients and healthcare providers are separated by distance. Developments of information and communication technology have a very significant influence in every aspect of human life, one of which is in supporting the application of information and communication technology in the health sector, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. X Hospital is located in Cikarang, is a type B private hospital. Most of the patients of X Hospital are BPJS patients, and according to the hospital administration, the percentage of BPJS patients can reach more than 80%. X Hospital was one of the Covid-19 referral hospitals in the Bekasi Regency area. The use of telehealth can improve patient care outcomes, mainly due to reduced time and costs for transportation and reduced barriers for patients to access to specialists. The purpose of the study was to get an overview of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics. The purpose of the study was to get an overview of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics. The purpose of the study was to get an overview of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics. The method used for this research is a qualitative method where data collection is done by interviewing about the perceptions of doctors and nurses in the use of telehealth at X Hospital. The results showed that the use of telehealth services at X Hospital was still limited to post Covid-19 patients and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. Most doctors have not supported the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine services for patients other than Covid-19 patients, due to obstacles in terms of medical ethics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Telehealth or telemedicine is the delivery of health services, where patients and health care providers are separated by distance. Telehealth uses information technology in providing information
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and in determining the diagnosis and treatment of disease and injury, research and evaluation, and for continuing education of health workers. Telehealth has contributed to the world of health by increasing access for patients to get quality and free health services, wherever they are. This is especially valuable for people in remote areas, with groups of people who are at high risk of degenerative and infectious diseases.[1]

Recently, information technology in health services has become a major issue throughout the world. Developments in the world of information and communication technology have a very significant influence on every aspect of human life, one of which is in supporting the application of information and communication technology in the health sector. In the health sector, changes in information occur very quickly, and at the same time information must be accurate, relevant and timely.[2] [3]

The use of telehealth can improve patient care outcomes, primarily due to reduced time and costs required for transportation and reduced barriers to access to specialist doctors. This is especially helpful for patients living in remote areas who need access to a specialist. Efficiency in health services has also increased due to reduced service costs. Even though there are still many obstacles in its implementation, many specialist doctors are getting good results from using telehealth.[4]

One of the uses of information technology is applied to homecare services that provide nursing care. Information technology experts state that 90% of adults have access to smartphones, this condition supports the application of technology for telehealth services which will support long-distance communication between health care providers and patients and patient families.[5]

According to a survey report by the Veterans Health Administration for patients undergoing neurology treatment, as well as parents of pediatric patients, telehealth can save expenses incurred by patients, save travel time and patients do not lose time for work. The results of this data indicate that there has been an increase in patient satisfaction, and 95% of patients stated that they chose to continue control of care with telehealth facilities.[6]

In facing a pandemic and changes in information technology, the world of health services must prepare itself to be able to adapt so that it can always provide the best service for patients, as well as for technological advances in the health sector. The use of telehealth also aims to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in face-to-face health services.[7]

2. METHOD

This type of research uses a qualitative method where data collection is carried out by means of interviews so that they are able to dig deeper into the perceptions of doctors and nurses in using telehealth at Hospital X. The research was conducted at Hospital X in Cikarang in March - April 2021.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents	units	Gender	Age
Respondent 1	Marketing Doctor (telemedicine)	P	52
Respondent 2	Head of ICU Nurse	L	34
Respondent 3	Head of ED Nurse	L	38
Respondent 4	Head of Inpatient Installation Nurse	P	42
Respondent 5	Inpatient Installation Nurse	P	40

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The condition of the Covid-19 pandemic affected service services in almost all fields, requiring service providers to adapt in the service delivery process, namely by serving online. Services in the health sector are no exception. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of telehealth or telemedicine services in Indonesia has increased. However, in practice, not all health service facilities have a policy for implementing telehealth or telemedicine. This can be due to various things, starting from the patient aspect, as well as medical personnel.

In this study, there were 5 respondents, namely one doctor who served as Marketing Manager of X Hospital Cikarang who was responsible for the use of telemedicine services at X Hospital, as well as

4 coordinating nurses for inpatient rooms for Covid-19 patients. The research was conducted using in-depth interviews with respondents.

The opinion of the X Hospital medical staff regarding the use of telehealth in the pandemic era, broadly agreed that the use of telehealth can assist in providing health services during a pandemic, but not all health services can be provided online, because there are legal, ethical and medical aspects that must be accounted for. by medical personnel. This is supported by several opinions from nurses and doctors as follows:

"Actually it's very helpful, especially in reducing transmission, because it's still a pandemic."(Respondent 3).

"For me it's good, it's safer too, prevention for us is also better, and if it's here it's already running."(Respondent 4)

"If we are here, frankly the telemedicine is not like telemedicine at other hospitals. In other hospitals, you can go to any doctor, now our doctor doesn't want to, if it's just anamnesis but not a physical examination. Because we don't only take anamnesis, but we have to do a physical examination, because in anamnesis sometimes we don't find it, but on the physical we find something, now that's what doctors don't want, that's why our telemedicine doesn't work for general patients who wants the consul, yes."(Respondent 1)

Telehealth benefits

Three interrelated parties in the health service process, namely patients, doctors and health service facilities, can be easily connected with telehealth or telemedicine. The patient referral process is faster, patients can be calmer while waiting for immediate help from medical personnel, and can select which patients need more intensive care and which patients can still be on an outpatient basis or stay at home.[8]

During a pandemic, the use of telehealth or telemedicine can be put to good use to monitor the condition of patients after Covid-19 treatment or to monitor the condition of patients undergoing independent isolation at home. When undergoing independent isolation, the patient remains at home, but can carry out online consultations with the treating doctor. Drug prescriptions can also be given online, and drugs can be delivered to the patient's home. Apart from patients, telehealth or telemedicine is also used to monitor the condition of hospital staff, both medical and non-medical staff, who are undergoing independent isolation when infected with Covid-19. Medical and non-medical staff who are infected with Covid-19 are monitored for their condition, and receive routine medication according to their needs, without having to come directly to the hospital.

Patients infected with Covid-19 with no symptoms or mild symptoms, it is advisable to stay at home, do not use public transportation, do not travel and do not go to work. This is done to break the chain of distribution. However, for patients who are undergoing independent isolation at home, if it is found through monitoring that the patient's condition is deteriorating, it is recommended that the patient be picked up and treated at the hospital immediately.

"If we did use it yesterday, during a pandemic, it's the same if any of our employees are affected, those who are positive, apply telemedicine, can be at home but we can call, regarding him the consul, what are the complaints, like that . It's really better, they don't have to go to the hospital, they don't have contact with anyone, that's it. They can isolate at home, but they can get medicine, they can monitor their condition at home."(Respondent 5)

"Our telemedicine is used for Covid patients who have been hospitalized, actually if for example the Ministry of Health pays that means they have to go to PPK 1, we only offer if he wants to control us, but the Ministry of Health won't be borne by the Ministry of Health. He can make telemedicine video calls with the treating doctor, but that's because he's just taking follow-up control, so the doctor still

wants to, or for example he's self-isolating with us, with company guarantees, so after he returns he's usually in control, that's how it is."(Respondent 1)

Apart from being a communication medium between medical personnel and patients, telehealth or telemedicine applications are also used for communication between medical personnel. Like a nurse who reports a patient's condition via video recording or video call to a specialist. This will facilitate the provision of health services, without having a specialist doctor present at the examination site. Submission of medical information about the patient's condition by the nurse, is certainly more objective than the patient's assessment of his own condition if teleconsultation is carried out between the doctor and the patient at home.

"In the emergency room at the hospital, we usually video the patient, for later we will consult the specialist via video, we will see from the video later. So in the emergency room it's like that, if we have a video of a new patient, we'll look at the oxygen saturation, the main thing is saturation, if it's patients with Covid or suspect Covid, what's important is seeing the saturation, while we're asking about complaints, while taking anamnesa, later the video was sent to a specialist for a consul. So complete."(Respondent 3).

The benefits of using telehealth or telemedicine, of course, are not limited to pandemic conditions, but their use can be developed more broadly, such as for palliative care of patients with terminal illnesses. With telehealth or telemedicine applications, patients in palliative care can still feel close to their families, whether they are treated at home with medical personnel monitoring if the patient's condition is stable, or hospitalized if the patient's condition is unstable.[9]

In handling pandemics and extraordinary events in the future, all stakeholders are encouraged to apply safe and evidence-based telehealth or telemedicine that is strengthened by regulations in the health service sector. For countries that have not yet integrated the use of telehealth or telemedicine, the existence of the Covid-19 pandemic is a reminder of the importance of government support for the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine.[10]

Use of Telehealth in Hospitals

The application that is commonly used for telehealth or telemedicine services is WhatsApp. The system used in X Hospital involves the role of a customer service officer (CSO) as a liaison between patients and doctors. In the disruptive era where most people have adapted to technological advances, it is also easy for patients and their families to use various applications that are used for remote consultations with the hospital.

"The system, yes they use WhatsApp, the problem is that the one contacting it is the CSO, who is the service, they will immediately video call this patient, to the sufferer. If there are complaints, they will be transferred to the emergency room here. Later the nurse who is affected, she will stay at home, we will contact her later. You don't have to come to the hospital anymore."(Respondent 5).

"Easy, the patients here hold their own cellphones, the condition is still CM (compos mentis), only oxygen saturation, so the patient is conscious but his oxygen level is 70-80. He can communicate with his family."(Respondent 2)

"It's easy, because we're the ones who call, then they already know, before that we'll be on video call, so from the hospital they'll call, they'll be contacted at a certain time, they'll be given to the doctor, here's the chat, then the doctor asks, what are the complaints? ."(Respondent 1)

Telehealth services can be used to increase public knowledge about health. It is undeniable that technological advances will increase rapidly, and all areas of service including hospitals must also be able to adapt. This service can be used as a form of initial consultation with patients, so that patients receive proper direction from medical personnel, not just decide for themselves about their health

conditions. But of course, the speed of people's adaptation to technological advances varies in each region.

"Actually, if you develop it, you can, it really helps the community too, it's just that sometimes it depends on the level of knowledge of the people, yes, if all the people are technology literate, it might be very helpful. But if in areas that have not been touched by cellphones, it is less helpful. Most of the patients in this hospital are familiar with telehealth applications."(Respondent 3).

Constraints to Implementing Telehealth

Not all health problems can be solved with telehealth services. Although there are various benefits in the use of telehealth or telemedicine, in its implementation there are medical and legal ethical aspects that are of concern in therapeutic transactions between medical personnel and their patients. Thus, telehealth or telemedicine certainly cannot replace conventional health services, but their presence has benefits as a support for overall health services.

"No, because telehealth is just information. Because it's difficult to prove the legal ethics. Because now if there is no black and white evidence, it will be difficult."(Respondent 2)

"If you don't replace it, I don't think so, meaning the physical examination is even better. Yes, just as a support."(Respondent 4)

In implementing telehealth, there are things that must be considered such as security and privacy, application availability and ease of use of the application. Health services with telehealth can use a variety of applications, such as websites, chat and telephone. At RS X, telehealth services are carried out using the telephone and the WhatsApp application.

Patient data is data that must be kept confidential, therefore, telehealth or telemedicine applications must be well designed, one of which is the classification of patient data, such as name, address, age, and so on. If telehealth or telemedicine applications are managed properly, leakage of patient data can be prevented.[11]

"For insurance patients, it's already running, reminded by phone for control."(Respondent 4)

"Yes, because if that's the case, we'll be the ones to contact them, right? Those who come here if there's a need, if this is where they can be contacted."(Respondent 1)

The development of information and communication technology in the health sector is basically in line with existing regulations. However, when considered from the point of view of the principles of medical ethics, where a doctor must physically examine a patient before making a diagnosis and therapy, the implementation of telehealth or telemedicine still faces many challenges. So, from an ethical point of view, the application of telehealth or telemedicine will have an impact on the relationship between medical personnel and their patients because it does not involve a face-to-face process.[12]

Development of Telehealth Services in the Future

Basically, the use of telehealth has great potential to be developed in today's digital era, because many people have followed the development of information and communication technology. Many people use data search engines such as Google or Yahoo to find answers to illnesses that they and their families are suffering from. A number of literatures show that the use of telehealth can be used to provide more accurate health information, with sources who are more competent in their fields, namely doctors, dentists, nurses, midwives, and other health workers.[13]

Health services in adapting to technological advances, of course, must be able to keep up with developments in the use of information technology to convey health information and health services themselves, even though their nature only supports primary health services.

"Maybe a system can be developed for post-care consultations."(Respondent 2).

"Because I'm also a doctor, if the patient is early then he can't, but if he's just for example post inpatient it's fine, or post outpatient he can't come here it's still okay. But we've never seen a patient who hasn't taken an history, hasn't even come here once, I think it's a bit difficult, isn't it?"(Respondent 1)

"Because now we cannot deny the advancement of technology. The world of health also enters, such as registering online. In the future, we must follow."(Respondent 3)

The development of telehealth as part of the Hospital Management Information System will contribute greatly from the aspect of providing appropriate and accurate information to patients and their families, so that the health services provided to patients can be sustainable and comprehensive. The existence of teleconsultation as a service in telehealth can also provide a sense of comfort and prevent patients or their families from feeling anxious about the health condition of themselves and their families.[13]

The development of telehealth also influences the field of nursing, where telenursing can facilitate the nursing process. One of the telenursing services that has been widely used is the provision of psychiatric nursing. Telehealth or telemedicine is recognized as an achievement in the health sector that will continue to develop in the future and has a major role in supporting nawacita and e-health in Indonesia. [14] [15]

4. CONCLUSION

The general perception of medical personnel is that the implementation of telehealth in X Hospital can only be carried out for post-treatment patients due to Covid-19 and non-BPJS self-isolation patients. This is because telehealth or telemedicine are not included in claims that can be submitted to BPJS. Most doctors do not support the implementation of telehealth for patients other than post-Covid-19 treatment, due to obstacles from a legal perspective of medical ethics, where doctors are constrained in direct physical examination of patients.

RS X has not yet developed a telehealth or telemedicine application. The application used for telehealth at X Hospital is WhatsApp, which is used for patient registration and monitoring of patients after Covid-19 treatment. Hospital X patients can easily take advantage of telehealth services because they can adapt well to technological advances.

Telehealth can be used for patient education and control schedules. Telehealth can also be used for employee patient consultations and monitoring of patient conditions during independent isolation. The development of telehealth in the future is very possible, and will be useful for post-care patient consultations, although not for initial examinations.

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