

Key elements to successful rapid uptake of telehealth in public hospital physiotherapy departments:

clinician perspectives

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AIM:

To explore staff perspectives of the key elements of successful, rapid implementation of telerehabilitation in medium-sized public hospital physiotherapy departments in response to COVID-19.

METHODS AND RESULTS:

- 25 physiotherapists (1-40 years clinical experience, 24% with telerehabilitation experience) from two Brisbane public hospitals
- Delivered telerehabilitation consultations in response to COVID-19 restrictions from March-September 2020
- Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews

CONCLUSIONS:

Facilitators of successful telerehabilitation implementation:

- Organisational, administrative and management support
- Willingness to adopt
- Shared learning experience
- Availability of equipment and space
- Optimised systems and processes

Facilitators of successful telerehabilitation consultations:

- Effective communication
- Demonstration
- Involving a third party to help
- Clients who are well prepared
- Clients who are willing to engage

Formal training, education, access to experienced telerehabilitation clinicians and optimised systems and processes may further facilitate the transition to and uptake of telerehabilitation for physiotherapy in hospital settings.



PEOPLE

Organisational, administration and management support
Willingness (clinician and client)
Learning on the go & from each other
Effective communication & demonstration
Client suitability (presentation, motivation, familiarity with technology)



ENVIRONMENT

Private, quiet, well-lit room
Adequate space
Access to equipment
Access to third party to help (client)

TECHNOLOGY



Quality software, fit-for-purpose
Reliable internet connection
Quality hardware (headset, adjustable camera)
Portable devices (client)



PROCESS

Formal training
Supervised sessions
Resources (clinician and client)
Troubleshooting guides
Access to experienced telerehabilitation clinicians
Planning, prioritising
Modifying approach (assessment & treatment)

Key factors facilitating successful telerehabilitation implementation

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