

Online Diabetes Nutrition Education – Sharing Experience in Hong Kong

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The COVID-19 pandemic has been greatly accelerated the development of telehealth services to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission whilst ensuring the continuity of patient care. It includes the teleconsultation, and telemonitoring of patients' condition. Relatively good patients' satisfaction, greater accessibility, convenience and reduced travel as well as wait times are some of the factors that have led to increased telehealth usage and acceptability. Although telehealth can be considered an efficient and safe modality to deliver healthcare through cutting edge communication technologies, in practice, there are barriers that can lead to unintended consequences, such as the inadequate internet bandwidth, lack of skills among users, inconsistent reimbursement regulations, and patient confidentiality, privacy as well as data security issues.

To date, there is no specific guidelines or regulation governing the provision of telehealth dietetic service in Hong Kong. As Hong Kong is a population dense area with relatively convenient transportation system and the doubt of the clinical efficacy of teleconsultation by the medical practitioners, the majority of the development of telehealth would be focused on the telemonitoring. Different health monitoring technology coupling with the cloud service allows healthcare practitioners and family to track the health parameters of patients, with some of them make use of the AI technology aiming to provide empirical advices according to the readings of the measurement. During the pandemics, some of the hospitals and clinics tried to set up the teleconsultation service based on the foreign experience and existing guidelines to make sure to make no harms to the patients and to protect the health workers providing such services.