

Healthcare Providers' Experience with Saudi Arabia's 937 Virtual Medical Call Centers and Telehealth [Letter]

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Dear editor

We have read the paper written by Ahmed M Al-Wathinani et al about Healthcare Providers' Experience with Saudi Arabia's 937 Virtual Medical Call Centers and Telehealth.¹ We congratulate all the authors who have provided important information regarding the experiences and perceptions of healthcare providers in assessing satisfaction with the use of telehealth in order to better identify future challenges. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has become increasingly popular and known to many patients, they use telehealth to meet personal medical needs, comprehensive and systematic measurement of patient satisfaction with telehealth can help in developing this method to be better and is a key indicator of the success of the method this.²

The study conducted by Ahmed M Al-Wathinani et al used an online survey and then conducted a cross-sectional descriptive analysis to provide an overview of the experiences and challenges of current health service providers.¹ This method is in accordance with the goals to be achieved; however, we would like to recommend adding several questions to the survey that can measure patient and doctor demographic data, experience with telehealth systems, including the information technology support they have, training, software design, burden doctor work and patient support, as well as data quality to make it easier to assess the impact of this telehealth system.³

In this research, Ahmed M Al-Wathinani et al found that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the 973 call center, and appreciated its ease of use and effectiveness in providing health services.¹ However, there is a correlation between individual well-being, which overall is a gap in using telehealth services such as patients who do not have internet access, and demographic and socio-economic factors.⁴ Although most participants were satisfied with telehealth services, only 2 out of 5 patients felt the service was affordable. They consider the cost of telehealth to be cheaper than inpatient consultations. However, they did not find any difference between the costs of telehealth and face-to-face consultations, so they were disappointed by this fact. Patients also face difficulties in obtaining insurance coverage for telehealth costs. Another big challenge is that telehealth services depend on how smoothly the teleconsultation runs, the quality of the video and audio, a stable network connection, and access to technology services.⁵

In conclusion, we agree that it is necessary to upgrade strategies in telehealth call centers to further improve the accessibility and efficiency of health services.¹ Therefore, we recommend further improvements to telehealth services, such as better network connections, efficient patient-doctor communication, ease and affordability of payment, as well as organized and structured delivery of health services via telehealth. (Patient) Additionally in progress In assessing patient satisfaction with telehealth, we not only pay attention to the significant dimensions but also need to pay attention to issues that so far have not attracted the attention and expectations of patients regarding telehealth.²

Disclosure

All authors report no other conflict of interest in this communication.

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