

FEASIBILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY OF TELEMEDICINE AMONG CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN FOR ASSESSMENT AT THE PHILIPPINE CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER NEURODEVELOPMENTAL PEDIATRICS CLINIC

Aileen Marie O. Vargas, MD, Aurora Aurea M. Reyes, MD, Maria Paz Irene L. Bautista, MD
Philippine Children's Medical Center
Child Neuroscience Division-Section of Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics



BACKGROUND:

COVID-19 pandemic forced the world on a “new normal” where social distancing and other behavioral changes were needed, affecting how health services were delivered. Telemedicine in Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics is a challenge since this requires interaction of the child, parent and physician.

OBJECTIVES:

To identify the technological literacy and willingness to undergo neurodevelopmental evaluation through telemedicine and to determine if the age of the child affects the caregiver's perception of telemedicine

METHODS:

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted on caregivers of children aged 3 months to 18 years for neurodevelopmental evaluation. A questionnaire to determine demographic data, technological literacy and willingness to use telemedicine was given via e-mail or Facebook messenger.

RESULTS:

Out of 925 caregivers contacted, 126 completed the questionnaire. The average age of the caregivers was 34.5 years, 86.51% were mothers. 80.48% had access to internet, with 86.51% having smartphones and 95.24% having a Facebook account. 86.51% were willing to use telemedicine for neurodevelopmental evaluation. There was no significant difference in the responses with the child's age.

CONCLUSIONS:

Participants showed willingness to use telemedicine in their child's evaluation, follow-up and for other medical and allied services. Reasons include reduced cost and time for travel and preparations for the appointment and to limit exposure to infections.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Further studies on the use of telemedicine in Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics, including studies on the parent and physician satisfaction of the assessments done are recommended.

KEYWORDS: Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics, Telemedicine, Children with Developmental Disabilities

