

Diagnostics – Telehealth & Burn Care - in search of a solution

Anne Darton¹, Siobhan Connolly², Julia Martinovich³

1 Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI), NSW Statewide Burn Injury Service (SBIS), Level 6, CSB, Royal North Shore Hospital, Reserve Rd, St Leonards, NSW 2065, anne.darton@health.nsw.gov.au

2 Agency for Clinical Innovation, NSW Statewide Burn Injury Service, Level 6, CSB, Royal North Shore Hospital, Reserve Rd, St Leonards, NSW 2065, siobhan.connolly@health.nsw.gov.au

3 Agency for Clinical Innovation, PO Box 699 Chatswood, NSW, 2057, julia.martinovich@health.nsw.gov.au

Introduction

Literature supports the benefit of Telehealth in acute care of a burn to assist local clinicians; evaluate, manage and transfer patients. Also for ongoing monitoring of patients managed or returned to local care and providing education to support local clinicians. There are a variety of setups and services across the three NSW Units using Telehealth.

Method

A Burn Telehealth Project was initiated with the support of the ACI and follows their project methodology:

- Project Initiation
- Diagnostic
- Solution Design
- Implementation
- Sustainability & Evaluation

The Diagnostic phase involved:

- A literature review
- Policy and guideline review
- Health Economic Evaluation Team – data and cost analysis on available burn data in the health system
- Consultation with ACI Rural Network Manager
- Consultation with NSW eHealth -current and possible future system wide solutions
- SBIS data review
- Survey of interstate Burn Units
- Site visits and consultations at three established Telehealth Burn clinics in Perth and Brisbane
- Semi-structured interviews performed with clinicians at the three Burn Units and Rural Hospitals
- Patient Experience Tracker used for both patients and rural clinical staff

Results

Currently in the Diagnostic phase themes have been highlighted under:

- Technology
- Processes
- Care

Critical success factors for successful Telehealth implementation have been identified and include; dedicated administration support and Telehealth Coordinators, recurrent funding, efficient scheduling and ability to store clinical images and consultations into the electronic medical record.

Discussion

The findings of the Diagnostic phase will inform the Solution design and subsequent implementation, evaluation and sustainability of the project.

Key Words

Telehealth, burn care, digital image, video clinic