

Virtual Care for People with Opioid Use Disorder: A Review

Category: Poster Presentation (in person)

Abstract Body

Background: Due to COVID-19, Canada has transitioned rapidly to virtual forms of primary care (VPC) and it is not well known how this transition has impacted people with opioid use disorder (PWOD). There are possible negative outcomes including disruption to opiate agonist therapies, and potential benefits, such as improved service access. This scoping review synthesizes current literature on VPC for PWOD to explore barriers and facilitators of the implementation, integration, and accessibility of virtual care.

Methods: We developed our methodological approach following JBI and PRISMA-ScR guidelines. With assistance from a content librarian, we developed search strategies using Medline, Web of Science, CINAHL Complete, and Embase, with no restriction on the date of publication. We used Covidence for data screening and extraction. We included research on primary care providers (including physicians, nurses, and other community workers) offering VPC for PWOD, using synchronous virtual modalities (telephone or video). We excluded research on minors, asynchronous delivery of care (e.g., apps or text messaging), or care offered through specialists, hospitals, carceral institutions, or addiction treatment centres.

Results: Data screening was double reviewed by two team members. Reviewers achieved a 75% minimum agreement in a pilot test of the review and reviewed any conflicts. While still in progress, we included 936 articles in the title and abstract screening, with an additional 533 duplicates removed. 126 are currently selected for a full text review. We will extract data on health system features; primary care setting; intervention description; patient outcomes; primary care providers implementation of VPC; barriers and facilitators of implementation, integration, or accessibility of VPC; and any innovations identified. We will summarize results in descriptive tables and conduct a qualitative content analysis on the extracted qualitative data.

Conclusions: While this project is ongoing, an emerging finding is the absence of research on how PWOD use VPC to meet health needs beyond opioid use disorder treatments. Final results of this scoping review will be presented at the conference.

Key Words

- COVID-19
- Opiate Agonist Therapy
- Primary Care
- Sociocultural Factors
- Virtual Care

Learning Objective # 1

By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to state the main barriers and facilitators of virtual primary care for people with opioid use disorder

Learning Objective # 2

By the end of this presentation, attendees will have an understanding of the paucity of research involving the use of virtual primary care for people with opioid use disorder (PWOUD).

Reference # 1

Russell C, Ali F, Nafeh F, et al.. Identifying the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on service access for people who use drugs (PWUD): a national qualitative study. J Subst Abuse Treat 2021;129:108374.

10.1016/j.jsat.2021.108374

Reference # 2

Blithikioti C, Nuño L, Paniello B, et al.. Impact of COVID-19 lockdown on individuals under treatment for substance use disorders: risk factors for adverse mental health outcomes.

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