



# Exploring the Role of Teledentistry in Providing Dental Care

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## INTRODUCTION

- Teledentistry has been explored not only in dental education but also in many clinical dental specialties.
- In early 2020, the field of dentistry faced an unanticipated widespread pandemic of COVID-19, which led to many challenges for patients and providers, and restricted the patients' access to the care.
- At Boston Medical Center (Boston, MA) this was the method of choice for the emergency dental consultations.
- While some researchers have been conducting studies on the methodologies used to practice teledentistry, it is still a developing field and further research is needed.
- Through retrospective chart review of the televisits during the pandemic, we aim to evaluate the services provided through teledentistry and evaluate the methods used to address and manage the patients' concerns.

## OBJECTIVES

- This project aims to evaluate the dental services provided through teledentistry and to evaluate the methods used to diagnose and manage patients' concerns during the televisits.
- The accuracy of diagnosis during televisits will be compared to the diagnosis made during the clinical examination.

## MATERIALS & METHODS

- This study is a retrospective chart review of patients who completed televisits during the COVID-19 pandemic and had subsequent in-clinic visits between March, 2020, and December, 2021, at the Boston Medical Center (BMC).
- Patient information was obtained from EPIC, the electronic medical record system.
- Televisits were conducted through both the departments of pediatric dentistry and oral and maxillofacial surgery at BMC.
- The diagnostic accuracy was compared between televisits and in-clinic visits. Radiographic evaluation and images will be used when available.
- Additionally, factors such as department, chief complaint and patient age group (< 7 years, 7-12 years, 12-21 years, >21 years) will be assessed.
- All statistical analysis will be conducted using SPSS statistical software.
- Demographic data will be analyzed by descriptive analysis then followed by univariate analysis.
- To evaluate correlation, logistic regression will be done between demographic characteristics and outcome.

## RESULTS

- Previous results on a total of **323** patients between March 2020 and February 2021 found the accuracy of diagnosis to be **72%** when comparing the diagnosis made during televisits versus in clinic.
- Currently, more data is being collected, and further in depth analysis will be conducted.

## CONCLUSION

- Interim conclusion based on preliminary results showed that teledentistry was an effective mode of providing care.
- Final conclusions are pending as more data is being collected.

## REFERENCES

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