

## **Patient experiences and preferences for pharmacist-delivered advanced care services in an FQHC during the COVID-19 era**

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### **Abstract**

**INTRODUCTION:** Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), face-to-face interaction between pharmacists and patients has been restricted in some federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). For this reason, pharmacists in these settings have increasingly relied on telehealth services to provide patient care during the PHE. Previous studies have produced results suggesting that, although patient demand for this mode of delivery is relatively low, it may facilitate access to care.

**OBJECTIVE:** The purpose of this study was to identify underserved patient preferences for in-person and telecommunication-based services that clinic pharmacists within an FQHC have been providing during the coronavirus PHE.

**METHODS:** This was a multicenter, cross-sectional survey of subjects age 18 to 89 years who had at least one in-person visit and at least one telehealth visit with a clinic pharmacist. Eligible patients were contacted by phone and if informed consent was provided, a questionnaire was administered verbally via telephone and recorded by researchers or completed by the participant via an online link to an identical online version of the questionnaire.

**RESULTS:** Data was collected from 39 respondents out of 97 eligible subjects for a response rate of 40.2%. 100% (n=39) of patients' telehealth visit was a phone call. 76.9% (n=30) stated they felt extremely comfortable having a telephone visit during the PHE and 92.3% (n=36) stated they felt extremely comfortable having an in-person visit before the PHE. After the PHE is over, 38.5% (n=15) said they would prefer to have a combination of in-person visits and telehealth visits. 7.7% (n=3) stated they would prefer to have only telephone visits, and 53.8% (n=21) said they would prefer to have in-person visits.

**CONCLUSION:** Despite previous research suggesting a low patient demand for telehealth services, the results of this study indicate that many patients prefer a combination of in-person and telehealth visits.