Adapting an Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic to Telehealth During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Practice Perspective

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the adoption and mass transition to telehealth overall, which has lead to the following concerns when implementing psychiatric services on a telehealth platform.

**What we have learned:** There are various strengths, challenges, and recommendations of telepsychiatry implementation that must be communicated in order to improve long-term clinical practices.

### Strengths
- Virtual groups have been well attended and engagement has increased.
- Patients are receptive and well-engaged.
- Telepsychiatry expands the boundaries of psychological intervention into the real world.

### Challenges and Recommendations
- Establishing a provider culture of telemedicine adoption
- Setting the physical and visual backdrop requires forethought and design
- High-risk patients
- Maintaining a work-life balance by separation of space and time
- Set the therapeutic frame with the purpose of managing risk
- Introduce the client to the virtual space and plan for the first session to take additional time

Center for Outcomes Research
COR@houstonmethodist.org