HSD118

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE DESERTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

A Health Improvement Pilot Study Leveraging A Global, Cloud-based Telemedicine Platform

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WORLD TELEHEALTH INITIATIVE

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project was to improve healthcare deserts in Sub-Saharan Africa through sustainable knowledge transfer and capacity-building leveraging an advanced cloud-based telemedicine platform.

METHODS

In 2022, WTI and its network of partners delivered 2 telehealth devices as part of the effort to create a sustainable platform to address a known health desert in a previously abandoned clinic in the village of Opoji, in the state of Edo, Nigeria.

Providers were trained in two cohorts. Global Experts for this project were organized with Providence Health and their Global and Domestic Engagement (GDE) department and trained by WTI in telementoring and teleconsulting. Local clinicians were first trained on the platform and then telementored by Global Experts.

To better understand the health value outcomes of these interventions, observational research was employed to measure the improvement of patient-to-provider ratios. These ratios were baselined for average patient loads.

PARTNER NETWORK

Teladoc HEALTH

MedicalImpactVentures

Precious Gems

Providence

URBAN HEALTH 360

RESULTS

As a result of the pilot, provider-to-patient ratios were improved. Prior to the WTI program, interventions were only available 5% of the time (9 hrs/wk vs 168 hrs/wk), with very basic expertise.

After the Opoji Comprehensive Medical Center was reopened and the supporting physicians were scheduled, patients could be seen with a high level of global medical expertise 100% of the time (24 hours per day).

BY THE NUMBERS

40,000
approximate population of Opoji, a network of 13 villages

21
global experts
(multi-specialty, mostly US-based)

72
onsite providers
(includes 18 med students)

125
Supporting/onsite provider sessions
(including group learning and group care)

ABOUT WORLD TELEHEALTH INITIATIVE

World Telehealth Initiative has an unprecedented capability to transform healthcare access for low-resourced communities. Our programs are made possible through our network of philanthropic physicians, telehealth technology, and collaboration with other global health organizations. We connect volunteer medical specialists with clinics and hospitals in underserved areas, to provide quality healthcare, upskill local providers, and build the capacity of their health systems for patients today and future generations.

CONCLUSIONS

Telemedicine technology can improve capacity-building in Sub-Saharan Africa with relatively minimal resource allocation in a replicable and scalable manner.

Data collection for the pilot did have limitations. The opportunity to collect patient-reported outcomes, including patient satisfaction with telemedicine visits, exists but COVID and other barriers prevented researchers from fully implementing.

By mentoring Local Specialists at the Opoji clinic and their referral hospital, the program developed an "Africans helping Africans" approach to achieve sustainable capacity building delivered through cloud-based telehealth devices, which can be built upon and further researched.

OUR OUTCOMES FILM

To support and disseminate the findings from this project, an Outcomes Microsite is being developed and a documentary-style film was produced. To view the film, scan here:

DISCLOSURES

This project was supported through an education grant from Pfizer, Inc. with in-kind support from Teladoc