



SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

September 2020

What is telemental health?

There is a growing need to deliver low-cost treatments tailored to individual needs and delivered in a continuous way from any location. Telemental health (or "ehealth") has the potential to meet this need. Telemental health refers to any mental health treatment that is provided electronically, either by telephone or internet such as online health programs, or video conferencing. This type of intervention involves structured counselling and generally aims to increase medication adherence and prevent relapse. Importantly, it also removes geographic barriers to care.

What is the evidence for telemental health?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds small effects of increased quality of life and decreased symptoms with social media interventions. However social support and self-management ratings were decreased. Moderate quality evidence finds a large effect of increased medication adherence with telemental medication management compared to standard care, pill counting, or early warning signs of relapse checklist. There was greater satisfaction with telemental communication than with standard care, non-web-based communications, or provision of information.

Moderate quality evidence finds internet peer-support delivered via Listserv or similar can provide social support. Review authors conclude that when peer-to-peer interactions were moderated by facilitators, retention, engagement, acceptability, and efficacy were higher than for interventions with no facilitators.

Moderate to low quality evidence finds PharmCAT (an app of environmental supports maintained on weekly home visits by a case worker) and MedeMonitor (smart-pill container capable of cueing the taking of medication and alerting staff of missed medication) is better at improving adherence than treatment as usual.

Moderate to low quality evidence finds the Information Technology–Aided Relapse Prevention Program in Schizophrenia (ITAREPS) can improve treatment adherence and reduce rehospitalisations.

For further information see the technical table



NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.

Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.

Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.

While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about schizophrenia or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia.