

## **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Releases Draft Report Calling for Further Research into Telehealth**

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The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has released a draft report conducting a literature review of studies researching the effectiveness of the current telehealth system. The report was initially requested by Senators Bill Nelson (D-FL) and John Thune (R-SD) to examine the value of telehealth and remote patient monitoring, with a focus on expanding access to care and reducing costs. An electronic copy of the report can be found [here](#).

The report concluded that there is a broad evidence base demonstrating the effectiveness of telehealth, particularly in the areas of chronic conditions, behavioral health, and when telehealth is used for providing counseling and monitoring. However, the report additionally identifies several barriers and challenges to widespread implementation and adoption of telehealth. Examples of such barriers include lack of provider support, licensure, reimbursement, scalability, and a lack of evidence-based research.

The report makes three recommendations to advance the field of telehealth. First, the report urges further development of research in a variety of clinical topics, including systematic reviews of existing research in consultation, acute care, and maternal/child health. Second, the report recommends developing additional primary research in the areas of triage, urgent care, and serious pediatric conditions. These are areas in which there is currently little evidence to support important decisions about practice and policy. Finally, the report suggests conducting research in emerging models of care, particularly value-based models where use of telehealth may improve the ability to share risk.

Comments on the draft report are due by January 6, 2016.

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