



Pacific Telehealth & Technology Hui

A DoD/DVA Joint Venture



Use of the Internet to Provide Follow-up Educational Information and Support to Cardiac Patients Following Rehabilitation

Background

Currently, there are former patients with heart disease that participate in a cardiac rehabilitation program consisting of supervised exercise and education/behavior modification designed to improve functional status and reduce risk of recurrence. However, some patients revert to prior behaviors, which put them at increased risk of further cardiac problems. In an attempt to minimize this recurrence and to facilitate a more effective means of medical service, Tripler Army Medical Center's Cardiology Service, with the support of Pacific Telehealth & Technology Hui, developed an interactive website to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information and resources between patients and health care providers. The research team's hypothesis was that the presentation of educational and motivational materials via the Internet could positively change health behaviors and cardiac risk factors in cardiac rehabilitation patients and thus, improve their quality of life.

The project website was developed with publicly accessible and password protected sections, which were used to exchange information between project patients and the project team. The website offered counseling, refresher/support programs of information, and resources to assist patients in controlling cardiac risk factors and possibly improving their health status and quality of life. Furthermore, the website had the added benefit of serving patients worldwide regardless of location with almost instantaneous contact and efficient two-way interaction.

Mission Statement

To develop an interactive website for the purposes of collecting patient data and disseminating health information and resources. The focus of the project will be to validate the feasibility of using the Internet in providing follow-on health care services to cardiac patients.

Strategic Direction

To provide a communication/information exchange via the Internet and to deliver a web-based, information service to cardiac rehabilitation patients.

Goals and Objectives

1. Determine whether the presentation of educational materials via the Internet can result in a positive change in health behaviors, functional status, cardiac risk factors, and quality of life in cardiac patients.
2. Determine whether Internet access at home or office results in more beneficial change as compared to having collateral or no Internet access.