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Telemedicine Use in the Pediatric Renal Transplant Population

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Problem/Purpose: Many times, the access to care is more limited for pediatric nephrology patients due to geographic limitations of locations of pediatric programs. Pediatric patients often travel several hours each way, or into neighboring states to receive appropriate care. Our nephrology and transplant center is setting up a telemedicine program in order to decrease the frequency of visits to our transplant center, which will make receiving care more time and cost efficient for our patients and their families, and improve the patient compliance and outcomes.

Approach: Our transplant center is partnering with our state health department and adult counterparts at a neighboring hospital (that already has a telemedicine program in place) to provide care to our pediatric renal transplant recipients that live in rural areas or who have difficulty getting to our transplant center for care. The local state health department in rural counties already have the infrastructure (equipment/trained staff) in place to support this program. Our entire transplant staff (nephrologists, transplant coordinators, social worker, pharmacist, dietician, counselor, child life therapist) will be available and will participate in these "visits". There will be criteria in place to allow the patient to participate in the program.

Results: This is a new program, so we have no results at this time. It is slated to "go live" by January 2018. The hope for this new program is to decrease the number of no show clinic visits, and improve our patient outcomes and lengthen the life of the allograft for these patients.

Conclusion: By providing more simple access to transplant care, the outcomes of the pediatric transplant patients will be enhanced by improved compliance with clinical visits and the difficulties faced by families of traveling many hours each way for a clinic visit will be lessened.

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