PP-27-MTS

ADVANCING TELEMEDICINE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE REMOTE PATIENT CARE

Gamage UIA[1], Ediriweera VH[1], Fazluna MFF[1], Gokulavathanan P[1], Wariyapperuma UM[2], Wijesiriwardana C[3]*

[1]*Faculty of Medicine, University of Moratuwa; [2]Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Moratuwa; [3]Department of Information Technology, Faculty of Information Technology, University of Moratuwa*

[*]*Corresponding author:upuliindrachapaag@gmail.com*

Background: Telemedicine stands as a transformative solution amid Sri Lanka's healthcare landscape, marked by extensive yet unevenly distributed healthcare services and critical gaps in specialist consultation, especially in rural areas exacerbated by economic challenges and healthcare worker emigration. This study evaluates the feasibility of advancing telemedicine technologies to enhance remote healthcare delivery in Sri Lanka, addressing barriers and proposing remedial strategies.

Methodology: A comprehensive literature review for both Sri Lankan and global data, observation of current practices, and a semi-structured focused group discussion were conducted to gather data on the existing telemedicine facilities. Data gathered from the employees of Asiri Medical Hospital (Pvt) Ltd was analyzed using thematic analysis by generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and labelling the themes.

Deliverables: The results of the analysis were categorized thematically. The experience and patterns of using telemedicine, the barriers and challenges in adapting to telemedicine, the motivations which led to adoption, the platforms used, the dilemma of addressed healthcare needs, benefits of telemedicine, concerns and risks, suggestions for improvement were discussed. Several directions for future developments are also included.

Conclusion: Overall, this research provides a solid framework for developing telemedicine as a tool to improve healthcare in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Telemedicine, Barriers, Healthcare, Sri Lanka, Remote