

EKO 2023 Spring Symposium – Poster Presentation Abstract

There is growing interest in Canada for increased virtual care provision to improve patient access to quality care, and while the utilization of virtual care services for children has increased substantially in recent years, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, an evaluation of this modality of care for children in Ontario has been lacking. In partnership with Empower Kids Ontario (EKO), our team led an external evaluation of virtual care services offered by organizations across Ontario. This evaluation focused on the *processes* and *outcomes* of a variety of virtual care services provided to children and families by Children's Treatment Centres and other organizations across the province. The results of this evaluation address a key knowledge gap in our understanding of the provision of virtual care services for children and their families in the province of Ontario. This evaluation was informed by the Quintuple Aim Framework which focuses on five domains: Population Health, User Experience, Provider Experience, Cost and Equity.

This study utilized a cross-sectional design, and data were collected throughout several waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, that were met with an unprecedented uptake in virtual care services. Data were collected from three unique study populations: 1) Organizations: 44 organizations that provided virtual care spanning across the province participated; 2) Service Providers: 194 service providers with various specialties participated; and 3) Parents/Caregivers: 909 parents/caregivers of children who have received virtual care in Ontario participated. Each of these populations completed unique online (self-reported) questionnaires to aid in the evaluation of virtual care services offered in the province. Data collected from these groups will allow for interpretation of the status of virtual care services that are presently offered to children in Ontario and will importantly identify potential ways to enhance both program and service delivery, as well as provide a measurement of the resulting impact of these services.