
SECURE SIMPLE TELEHEALTH VIDEO CONFERENCING

University of Pennsylvania Uses Telemedicine to Fill Gap in Cancer Screening



Telegenetics Program Expands Access to Cancer Genetic Services

Life-saving genetic cancer screening and counseling have often been limited to those who live in major cities or near academic medical centers where genetic services are offered. Penn Medicine's Abramson Cancer Center is expanding that access and empowering those at risk for cancer by using real-time video conferencing – including MediSprout's HIPAA compliant V2MD – to remotely connect patients and genetic providers.

“There's a huge demand for genetic counseling and testing – an increasingly important part of cancer care – and not enough genetic providers to meet that demand,” says Cara Cacioppo, MS, LCGC, a genetic counselor at the University of Pennsylvania Telegenetics Program. “Patients who could benefit from services are often restricted by barriers such as distance from genetic providers and the inconvenience of taking time off from work to get to appointments. Telemedicine changes that, providing convenient access to genetic services that can evaluate hereditary risks and aid in prevention and treatment of cancer.”

Instead of traveling to a long-distance appointment, patients virtually meet with a genetic counselor via a video call conducted from their local hospital. They review medical history, assess hereditary cancer risk, explore genetic testing options, and discuss cancer risk management guidelines. MediSprout's V2MD videoconferencing technology allows providers to document visits and provides a split screen to facilitate face-to-face interaction between patient and provider by enabling providers to share visual aids – PowerPoint slides or graphics of complex information, for instance – while keeping eye contact with a patient.

“Telemedicine fosters a deeper psycho-social relationship between patient and provider, something that is really important in genetic counseling where we are discussing heavy information and potentially delivering difficult medical news,” says Cacioppo. “Patients appreciate the face-to-face interaction, in addition to the access and convenience that telemedicine provides.”
