

Tele-physiotherapy: A Sustainable and Innovative Model Redefining Patient-Centred Rehabilitation

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ABSTRACT

Tele-physiotherapy, defined as the delivery of physiotherapy services through digital communication technologies, has emerged as a transformative solution in modern healthcare. Traditional physiotherapy has relied on in-person assessments and interventions, restricting availability for individuals in distant regions facing movement challenges or during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. With the global rise in chronic diseases and the rapid digital transformation of health services, tele-physiotherapy emerges as a scalable and timely response to the growing demand for accessible, affordable, and patient-centered rehabilitation across diverse healthcare settings.

This review aims to explore how tele-physiotherapy addresses these barriers by enabling remote assessments, supervised exercise programs, patient education, and tracking improvement. It also examines its clinical efficacy and factors for integration into routine healthcare.

This narrative review synthesises recent evidence on tele-physiotherapy and examines advancements in telecommunication and portable digital devices. These innovations support features, including immediate responses from users, individualised exercise programmes, and interactive patient engagement tools.

Findings from published studies suggest that telephysiotherapy provides clinical outcomes comparable to conventional in-person therapy for physical activity for those with muscle, nerve, or long-term health issues. Patients report greater adherence, satisfaction, and self-management, while healthcare systems benefit from reduced costs and resource utilisation. Telephysiotherapy further improves accessibility in rural or underserved regions, ensures continuity of care after surgery or in chronic conditions, and supports service delivery during public health emergencies. Challenges include patient selection, digital literacy, and ethical concerns such as data privacy.

Tele-physiotherapy represents a sustainable, scalable, and innovative model of rehabilitation that extends beyond crisis-driven solutions. By enhancing accessibility, engagement, and quality of care, it is well-positioned to redefine patient-centred physiotherapy. Its successful integration into mainstream practice requires thoughtful strategies to address technological and moral aspects; upcoming studies need to focus on extended results, cultural adaptability, plus creating uniform guidelines to maximise its global acceptance and effectiveness.

Keywords: Delivery of healthcare, Health services accessibility, Remote patient monitoring, Tele-rehabilitation

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