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## Use of Tele-Mental Health in Consultation Liaison Psychiatry

Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) is a tertiary treatment facility that receives patient referrals from around the globe, involving a myriad of specialties. Patients presenting complex symptoms must often be subjected to costly diagnostic procedures. Such evaluation can be lengthy and expensive in terms of manpower, bed space, lost duty time and time away from home and family. In many cases further expense is incurred when a family member must accompany the patient, sometimes for the duration of their stay.

The Psychiatric Consultation and Liaison Service (PCLS) fulfills approximately 5000 psychiatry consult requests annually. Many of these patients travel from far outside the WRAMC region; many must also return to duty sites that do not provide on-site Mental Health services capable of fulfilling on-going post-consult needs. Tele-Mental Health capability has proven to be a valid solution for enhanced service and continuity of care throughout the military healthcare community. The Department of Psychiatry at Walter Reed Army Medical Center utilizes the Behavioral Health Care Team concept in the provision of Psychiatry-Psychology-Social Work consultation and treatment.

This project focuses on extending this concept and the function of PCLS to serve complex medical patients with variants of known BIO-Psycho-Social symptoms. The nature of somatoform disorders can be a perplexing therapeutic challenge for the primary clinician. Utilizing video teleconferencing as part of the therapeutic paradigm creates an efficient network that also has an educational component. Referring clinicians receive an educational opportunity as well as ongoing support for the care of clinically challenging patients. One important metric for this study will be to provide referring physicians a satisfaction survey to address issues of CME and quality satisfaction.

### Points of Contact

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