Exploring patient experiences of accessing psychological support through telehealth

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Presentation overview

- Brief introduction to what telehealth is

- Background research

- Telehealth in context of the study

- Findings

- Impact

What is telehealth?

"Telehealth refers to both the remote monitoring of people living with a chronic condition to support self-management and delivery of care, and the use of information and communication technology for remote consultation between health professionals or between a health professional and a patient e.g. providing health advice by telephone, videoconferencing to discuss a diagnosis, or capturing and sending images for diagnosis" (Rural Health Implementation Group, 2011)

Existing literature

- Collie, Kreshka, Fernier, et al. (2007) provided psychosocial support to rural dwelling breast cancer patients using videoconferencing technology. Their findings demonstrated acceptability, feasibility and a significant decrease in depressive symptoms amongst their patients.

- Olver, Brooksbank, Champion, et al. (2005) trialled videoconferencing in oncology to support rural patients and found increased frequency of patient-professional contact.

- Whole Systems Demonstrator project (Newham, Kent and Cornwall)

- Majority of research conducted in this field is overseas (Canada, Australia, USA)

- Most projects are quantitative in nature and very few present a longitudinal perspective
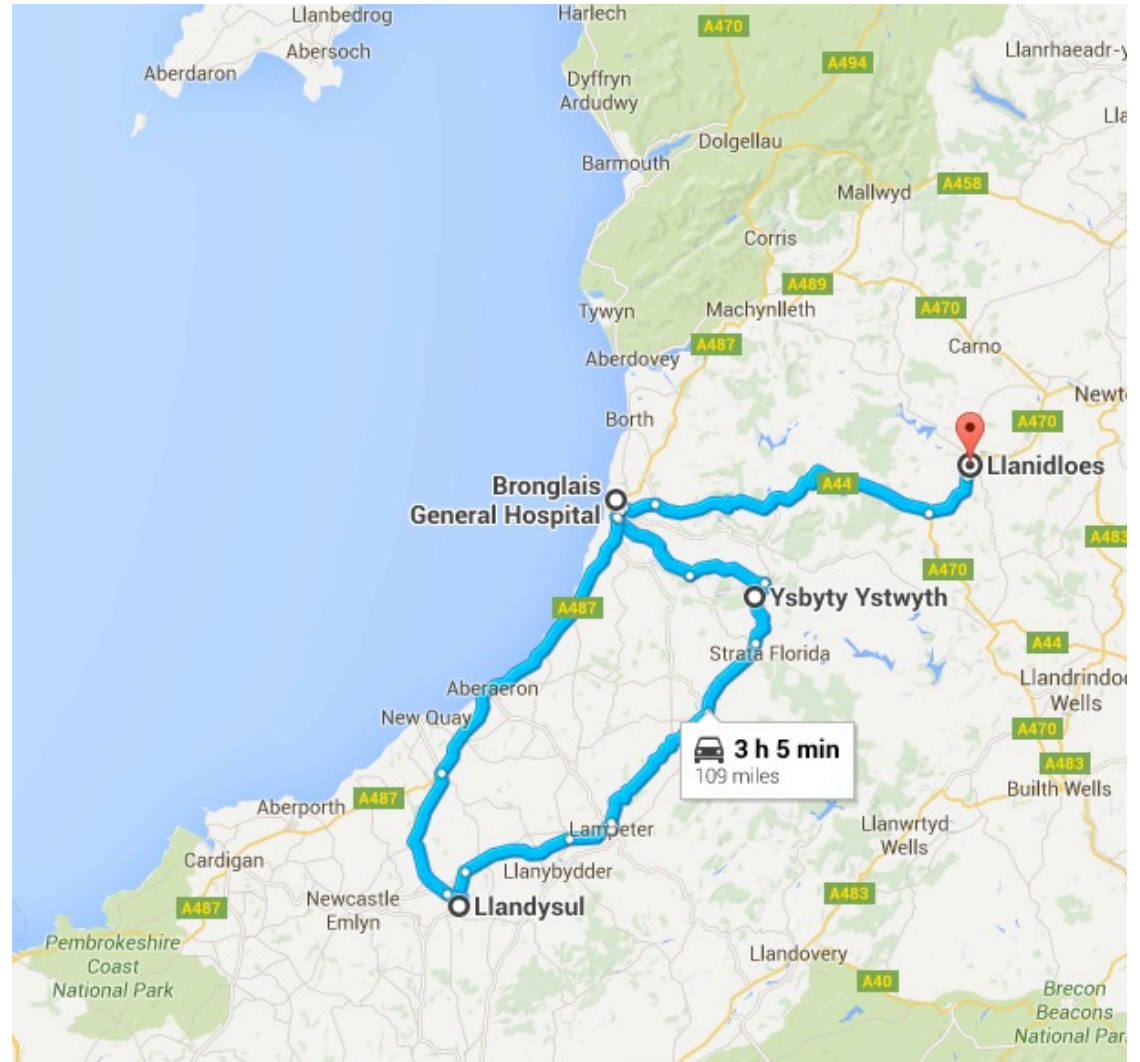
Context of the study

Participants lived in three locations across Wales:

- Llandysul
- Llanidloes
- Ysbyty Ystwyth

Each participant provided with a laptop with secure VC software installed.

Access psychological support remotely from their own home from a health professional based in Bronglais hospital

Research Design

- The study adopted a longitudinal qualitative design

- Multiple case studies approach

- 3 participants

- Each interviewed 3 times over a period of 3 months

- Semi-structured interviews

- Analysed using IPA

Findings

- Self-determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) postulates that humans have three inherent needs.

- Relatedness
- Autonomy
- Competence

- When one of the needs is thwarted it is expected that the person will experience passivity, ill-being, fragmentation and alienated functioning (Deci & Van Steenkiste, 2004).

- Participants made sense of their experience using telehealth as one which facilitated an environment where these needs can be met.

Relatedness

- The need for relatedness concerns the universal wish for a person to feel connected to, interact with, and care for others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995)
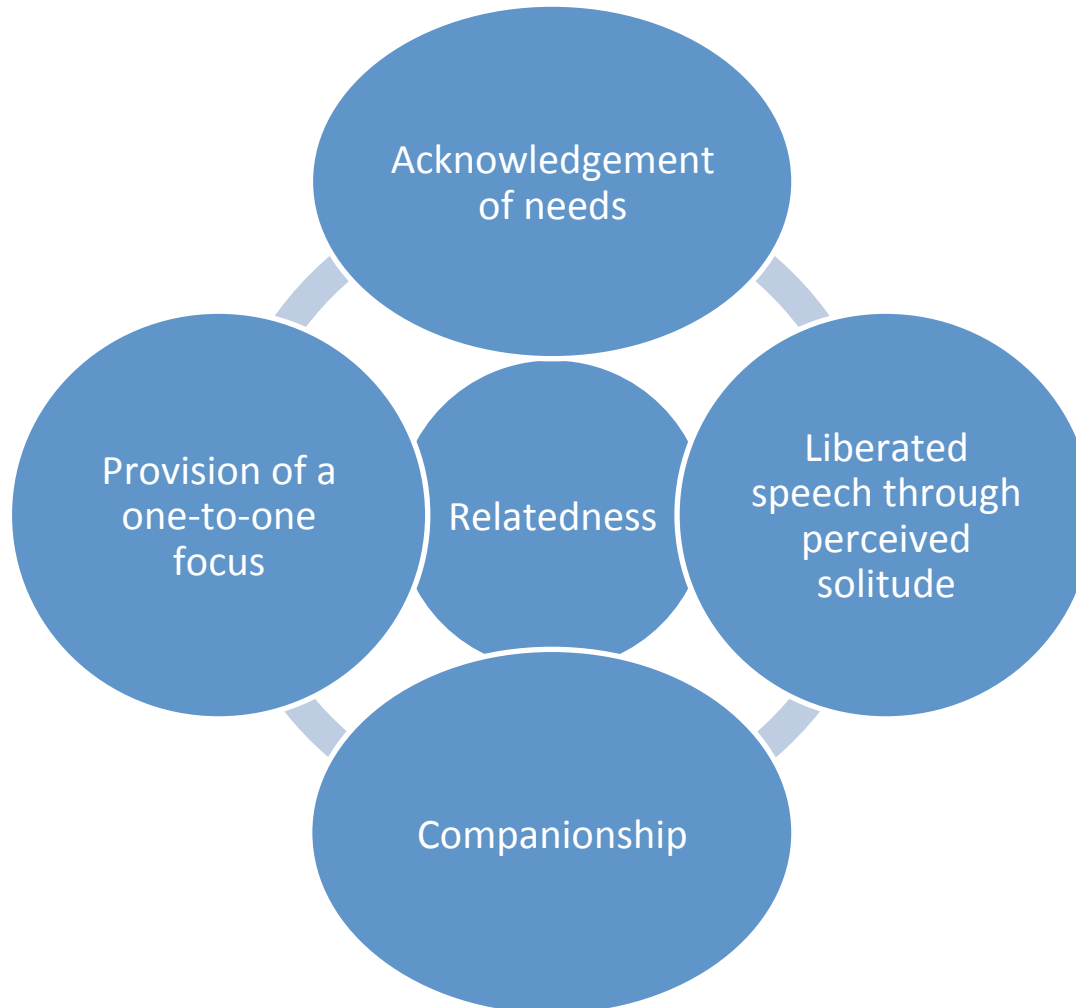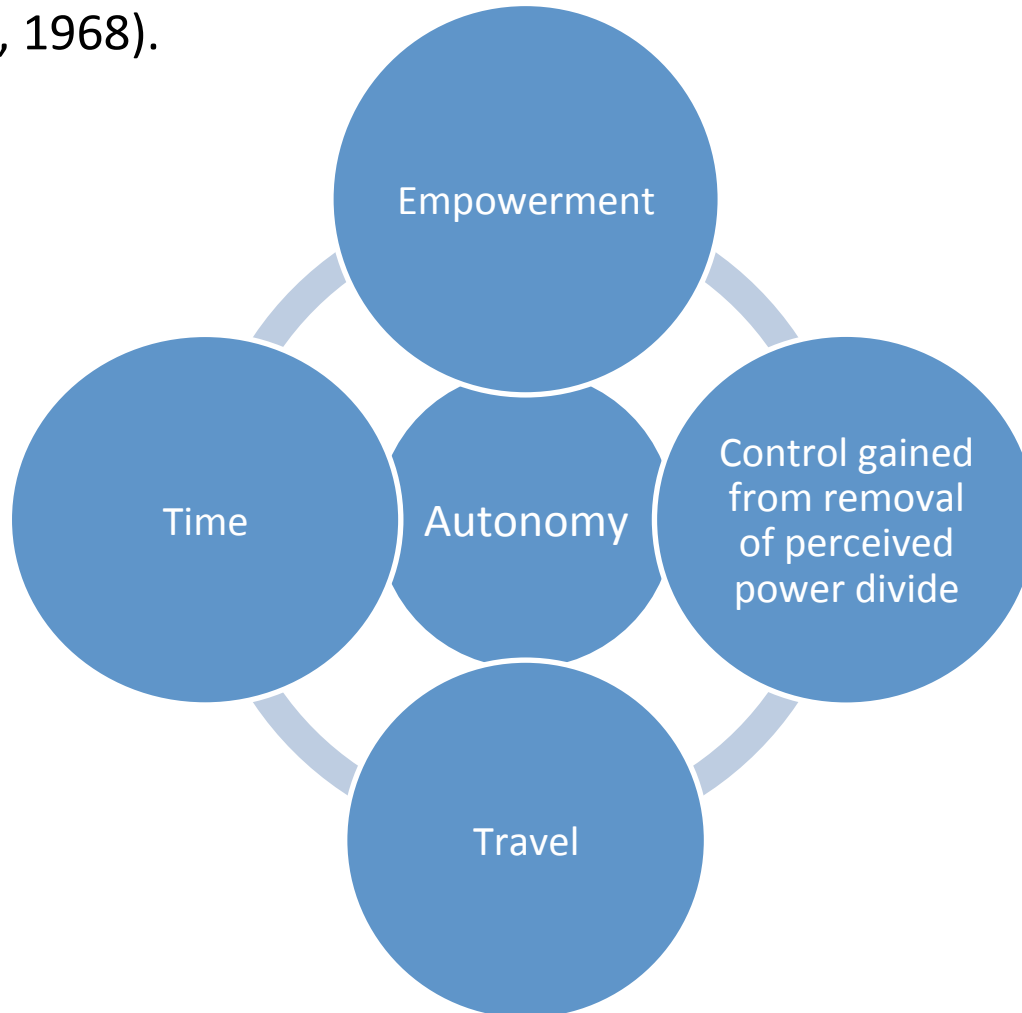
Competence

- The need for competence concerns a person's desire to be effectively able to deal with their environment or experience (White, 1959).

Autonomy

- The need for autonomy is associated with the need for an individual to be a causal agent and act within their own sense of values and self-concept (de Charms, 1968).

Why is this research important?

- Provides a good insight into the feasibility of the use of telehealth to access psychological support

- Demonstrates patient acceptability of telehealth

- Using telehealth as a platform for sessions did not **DETRACT** anything from usual care.

- Provides a theoretical insight into the role telehealth could play in satisfying patient needs.

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