W1F: The Telemedicine Research Field:
A Rigorous Debate on the Opportunities and Challenges

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ATA 2005 – April 17-20, 2005

Overview

- Design do's & don'ts
- Ask right questions, hypotheses
- Select valid, feasible measures
- Ensure publications in right outlets
- Balance health delivery/research ideals
- Move research from mundane to sophisticated

Design do's & don'ts

- Select appropriate theoretical and methodological frameworks:
  - Case studies
  - Communities of Practice (COP)
  - Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Baselines
- Needs assessment
- User or client-driven
- Pretest quality-measurement tools
- Frameworks, measures, outcomes - previously used

Design do's & don'ts

- Ensure appropriate resources in place (human, infrastructure, funds)
- Select feasible outcomes
- Remember: Objectivity is key
- Distinguish Research and Evaluation
- Consider all key players
- Consider comparative approaches
- Consult with data analyses experts

Ask right research questions & hypotheses

- Align goals and objectives with decision-makers' needs

- Consider all key stakeholders

- Balance scientifically valid evidence with practical reality of Telehealth

- Separate pilot questions from mainstream inquiries

Select valid & feasible measures

- Use established tools where possible
- Adopt combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches
- Utilize triangulation
- Consider baseline, immediate, intermediate and long-term goals
- Conduct pilot studies if new tools used

Ensure scholarly publication in right scholarly outlets

- Consider audience and disciplines
- Consider readership (stakeholders, decision-makers)
- Consider timeliness of journal publication
- Consider peer review requirements
- Consider national and international outreach
- Consider previous opportunities to share work (i.e. conferences, symposiums)

Balance realities of health delivery with ideals of research

- Distinguish research from evaluation

- Consider all stakeholders

- Discuss goals and objectives at onset of projects with all parties

- Keep feasibility and objectivity in mind

Move research agenda from mundane to sophisticated

- Applied research can be sophisticated (useful and used)

- Conducted in real, socio-political context

- Quality is critical to any research; sophisticated methodologies can be applied

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