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TELEHEALTH IN ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO CARE IN RURAL GEORGIA

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Telehealth in Assisted Reproductive Technology to Improve Disparities in Access to Care in Rural Georgia

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ABSTRACT

Assisted reproductive technologies (ART) is a commonly used method to treat tubal, male, age related and multifactorial infertility. Only 60% of patients who require ART are able to proceed with treatment due to the scarcity of fertility specialists in central Georgia. Telehealth is a well-established tool that alleviates these burdens. While other areas of medicine have welcomed this technology, reproductive medicine has yet to utilize it to its full potential. A regional telehealth program was implemented to help close the gap and improve existing disparities in ART access in Georgia and neighboring states. Our aim was to evaluate our telehealth program's ART outcomes and patient satisfaction of those living remotely. The survey included a patient satisfaction questionnaire as well as travel distance, number of visits, and ART treatment outcome. This questionnaire was sent to patients who utilized the telehealth application for ART services at Augusta University (AU) between September 2015 to November 2018. Demographic variables were collected using the electronic medical record including age, type of ART cycles, travel distance, number of visits, and treatment outcomes.

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