



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Telenursing in Elderly Care: A Hidden Challenge in the Healthcare Systems

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With the growing elderly population, the need for flexible, continuous, and cost-effective care—especially in home settings—has significantly increased (1). Telenursing, as a modern approach based on information and communication technologies, offers a promising avenue for remote care delivery, minimizing the need for elderly individuals to attend healthcare facilities in person (2). This care model has shown a considerable impact on improving self-care, treatment adherence, and self-efficacy among older patients (3, 4). However, the implementation of telenursing is fraught with several challenges (5). Systematic reviews have indicated that adults over 60 often face barriers, including low digital literacy, a lack of familiarity with technology, insufficient training, and concerns about information security (6, 7). Moreover, the digital divide—driven by income disparities, educational inequalities, and inconsistent internet access—contributes to unequal access to telenursing services among elderly populations (8).

In the field of nursing research, there is still a lack of sufficient studies to assess the long-term effectiveness of telenursing in elderly care. Many technologies are introduced without a proper assessment of their usability for older adults, and most studies are short-term or observational in design (2). While some evidence suggests that telenursing can reduce hospital admissions, enhance patient satisfaction, and improve chronic disease management (9), robust randomized controlled trials (RCTs) focusing on the elderly population are still limited and urgently needed (10).

Available data suggest that, in many cases, telemedicine can be as effective as, or even more effective than, traditional in-person care, especially in managing chronic conditions and ensuring patient satisfaction among older adults (11). However, ongoing challenges, including poor IT infrastructure, insufficient specialized training for nurses and elderly users, ethical and data privacy concerns, and a lack of clear legal frameworks, have hindered the widespread integration of this technology into the healthcare system (5).

Other studies highlight specific difficulties, such as hearing impairments, challenges in using digital tools, and the lack of physical examinations by physicians, which reduce the usability and acceptability of telenursing systems for elderly users (11). These barriers collectively prevent the realization of the full potential of telenursing in elderly care, turning it into a hidden yet complex challenge within the healthcare system (12).

Nevertheless, this review shows that healthcare providers can adopt telemedicine as a complementary approach to conventional care for elderly populations. Future research should focus on overcoming current barriers, enhancing the usability of technology, and increasing adoption rates among the elderly to unlock the full benefits of this transformative approach.

Keywords: Telenursing, Remote Patient Monitoring, Telemedicine, Digital Divide, Geriatric Nursing



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