Utah Telehealth Network

TELEHEALTH

Building a relationship over distance: How to convey caring and empathy when videoconferencing?

Human Factors for Clinicians & the Community to Promote Acceptance:

- Framing techniques
  - Use PIP (picture in picture) and adjust the camera controls to frame participants
  - Lighting in front of participants enhances, while background light can detract the image, i.e. windows/ sunlight behind the participants will make the room and participants dark
  - Backgrounds are important and can be distracting
  - Room colors can enhance the image, blue wall paint is the best

- Introduce yourself & others in the room, when you start speaking.

- Adjust your camera and microphone so that the far site can see and hear you. Look in to the camera and check PIP.
  - Eye contact – direct your vision to the camera to emulate eye contact
  - Speak in your normal voice without shouting.
  - Make sure that you can see and hear the far-site participants and confirm they can hear and see you.
  - Delay in audio – this is normal, wait to avoid speaking over, apologizing if you speak over someone.
  - Place the microphone between the monitor and the people closest to the monitor.
  - Avoid tapping on the microphone or rustling papers near the microphone.
  - Mute the microphone before moving it so that the far site doesn't hear you moving it.
  - In a multipoint call, mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

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3/12/2015

- Acknowledge technical difficulties – there are always surprises…
    - It is best to interrupt if you can't see or hear each other.
    - Be flexible and patient with yourself and others
    - Humor always helps!

- Emergency plan: What to do if you loose connection or you are unable to connect? Write down the plan, including the contact information: phone & FAX

- Clinical Telepresenter
    - Equipment check,
    - Pre & post paperwork,
    - Contact information: phone & FAX
    - Privacy – closing doors
    - Don't obscure the patient, stand to the side of the patient.
    - Scheduling
    - Technical support

- Sensitivity with cultures (Rural, urban, American Indian, adolescents and children)

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