

Recommendation based on Older Adults' Telehealth Usage during COVID

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Introduction

- Telehealth is an exchange of medical information through electronic communication to improve a patient's health.
- Provide numerous benefits namely increased access to quality care and reduced travel times yet filled with many barriers.
- Older adults benefit the most from the adoption of telehealth as the U.S. transitions to an aging society.

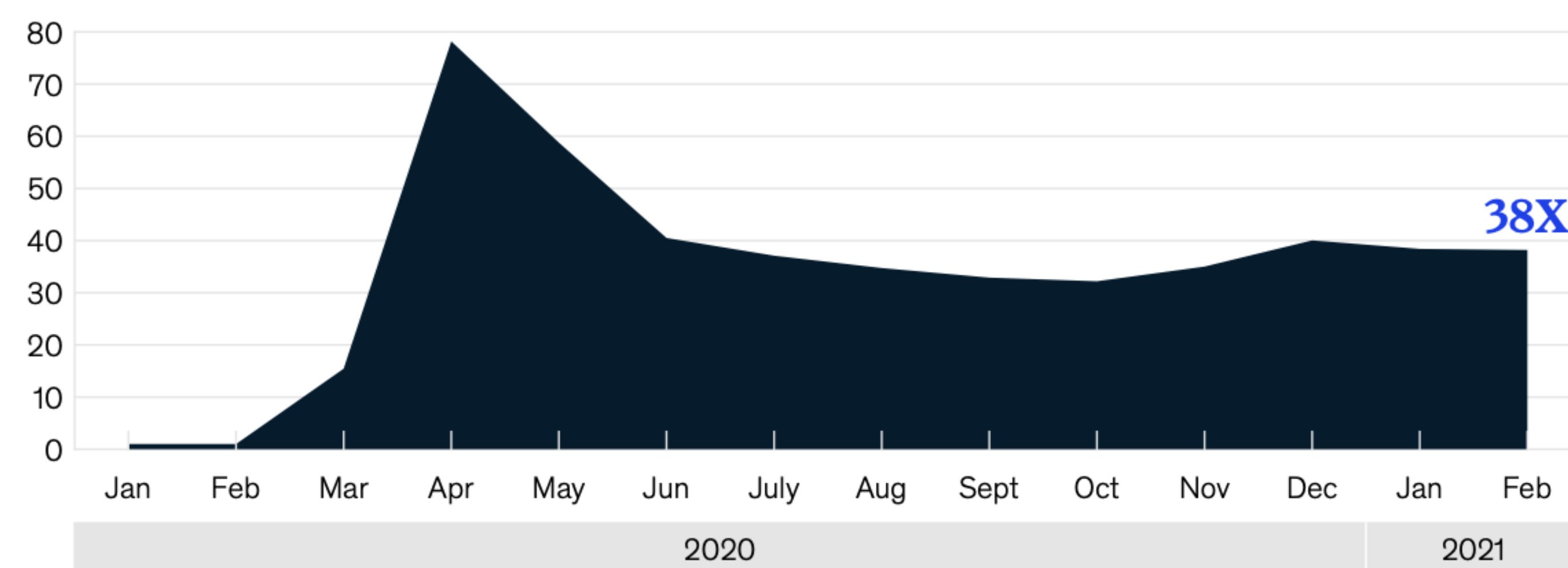


Figure 1: Increased in telehealth usage 38 times during COVID [1]

Methods

Participants

- 65 years or older with medical appointments during the pandemic
- Recruited from retirement communities via flyers, snowball sampling, and direct in-person contact

Data Collection

- 15 semi-structured interviews ranging from 14 to 53 minutes, on average 25.5 minutes long.

Data Analysis

- Followed thematic analysis approach [2]
- Coded the transcribed recordings
- Grouped coding data into coherent themes

Findings

Themes

Independence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation-related • Weather-related • Covid-related 	Tech-related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment cost and access • Lack of technological knowledge • Technical issues
Tangible interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal touch • Physical cues 	Physical limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve physical procedures • Impairment/Disabilities

60% of the participants used some form of telehealth during the pandemic.

Discussion

Barriers/Benefits

Before pandemic	Findings
Challenging to learn to use telehealth [3]	No motivation to learn to use telehealth
Limited telehealth reimbursement	More telehealth reimbursement
Little to no social distancing	Social-distancing protocols in place
Some privacy concerns	Little to no privacy concerns
Negative stigma toward older adults using technology	No mention of such a stigma
Inexperience with technology	
Telehealth's limitation on body languages	

Recommendation

- Provide more ride availability to healthcare facilities with reduced fares
- Provide Medicare and insurance coverage on more telehealth services
- Subsidize equipment necessary to conduct telehealth
- Provide more informed sessions and training on benefits and guidance to telehealth
- Provide more technical support that catered specifically to older adults
- Allow patients to do more types of medical examinations in the local pharmacies/clinics
- Develop easier-to-use telehealth platforms
- Used telehealth in place of in-person for visits that involve little to no physical procedures
- Consider older adults when designing a telehealth user interface

Future Work

- Evaluate current telehealth platforms
- Develop a revised platforms prototype
- Evaluate the prototype in focus groups

References

- [1] Bestsenyy, Oleg, et al. "Telehealth: a quarter-trillion-dollar post-COVID-19 reality." McKinsey & Company 9 (2021).
- [2] Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." Qualitative research in psychology 3.2 (2006): 77-101.
- [3] Pang, Carolyn, et al. "Technology adoption and learning preferences for older adults: evolving perceptions, ongoing challenges, and emerging design opportunities." Proceedings of the 2021 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems. 2021.