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Poster Presentation

eHealth Utilization Patterns by Military Health System Consumers

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Introduction: Health care consumers in the U.S. are increasingly interacting with the health care system through electronic means (eHealth). Primary care in particular has seen a shift to eHealth by consumers under age 30, with a growing demand for routine appointments, prescription refills, and appointment booking through modes such as virtual visits, electronic health portals, and electronic messaging. The Military Health System (MHS) has implemented multiple eHealth tools for use by its consumers over the past decade, including patient portals, secure messaging, and full adoption of electronic health records. The MHS reports 70.5 million annual visits across 375 outpatient clinics, but little is known about what portion of these visits are achieved by eHealth modes and how consumers interact electronically with the MHS. Our study investigated the utilization patterns of eHealth consumers in primary care within the MHS. **Methods:** Retrospective analysis of the TriCare Online Patient Portal/Secure Messaging utilization metrics was completed using various regression models. We assessed the frequency and type of eHealth utilization for services such as healthcare appointments, information seeking, patient-provider communication, and prescription refills. Additionally, we examined eHealth utilization trends by TriCare Regions and differences in eHealth utilization by Military Service, age, sex, and consumer type (Active Duty, retired, dependent). **Preliminary Results:** Consumers affiliated with the Army use eHealth applications with greater frequency than Navy or Air Force consumers. Viewing and downloading health record data are the most used MHS eHealth functions. Non-Active Duty females between the ages of 25-35 are the highest users.