

The Experience of Establishment Wound Care Center and Outpatient Clinic Telemedicine at a Middle Hospital in Taiwan

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INTRODUCTION

Taiwan has entered a "Super-aged society," with approximately fifty percent of elderly individuals suffering from multiple chronic diseases, leading to complex care challenges. This situation has resulted in burdens on family care resources, long-term care, and medical resources. According to Taiwan's National Health Insurance data, around 510,000 people with chronic underlying diseases go to hospitals for difficult wounds . Therefore, the care of chronic wounds has become a significant task for regional middle-sized hospitals in Taiwan.

AIM

1.Since 2020, a wound care outpatient clinic has been established to connect with a specialized wound care nurse and coordinate various specialist treatments.

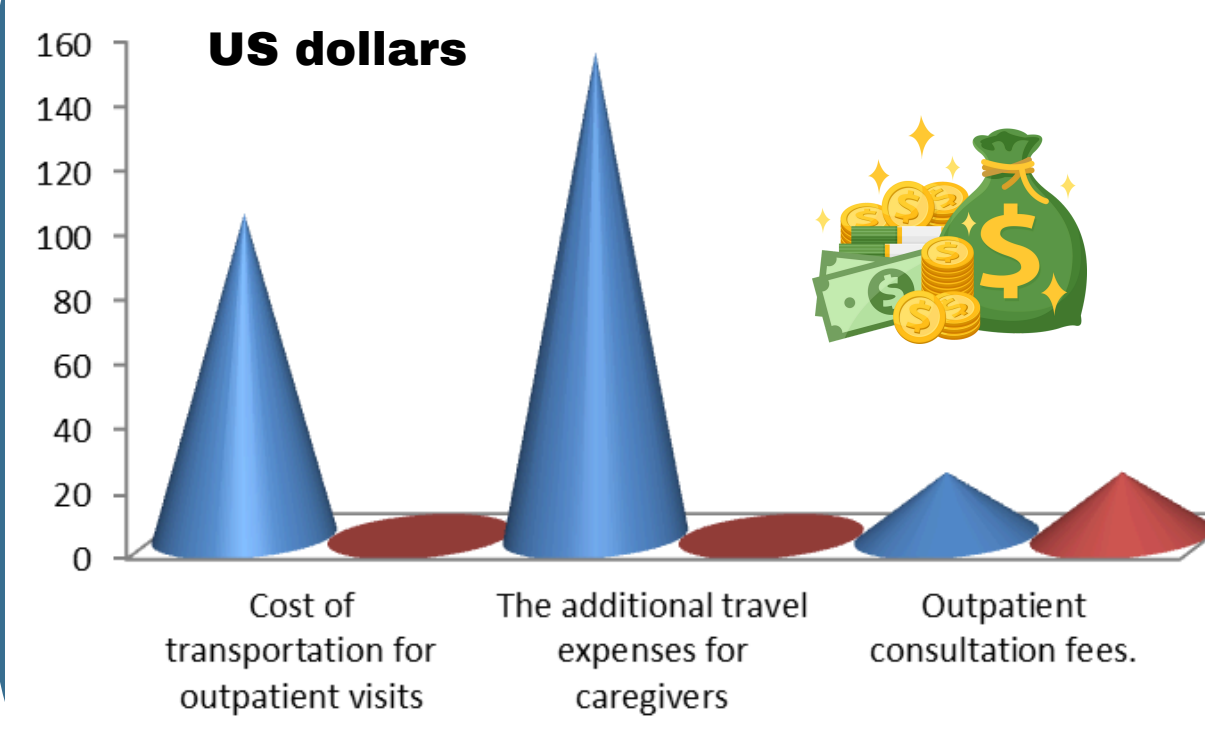
2. In October 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan, a specialized telemedicine wound care outpatient clinic was launched to reduce the frequency of in-person visits.

RESULTS

This table shows the types of wounds for 40 patients enrolled and the changes in wound conditions tracked via video follow-ups.

Baseline patient characteristics.			
Demographic characteristics		Number of participants	
Age		65–90years	
Types of wounds		Improvement in wound condition	
Pressure injury, Grade2-3	80%	3months-50%	6months-80%
Peripheral Arterial Occlusion Disease	10%	3months-20%	6months-40%
Diabetic foot, Grade1	10%	3months-40%	6months-80%
Ability to self-care		Dependent 100%	

US dollars



This chart illustrates that the total cost for general outpatient visits is typically over \$250 USD, with wait times of over 2 hours. In contrast, telemedicine appointments only require consultation fees and additional costs for wound dressings, reducing both the time and money patients lose due to appointments.

Specialized outpatient wound clinic



Outpatient treatment room



Patients in nursing facilities requiring wound care assessment

Schedule video consultations via the APP Line

Physicians and institutional nurses conduct video assessments of patients' wound conditions. Each interview lasts approximately 40 minutes.

Stable wound

Unstable wound

Family members go to the hospital to pay fees and collect relevant wound dressings and medications.

Consider hospitalization for treatment or arrange outpatient surgery.

Follow up of App Line Appointment

Telemedicine Consultation Process Chart

METHOD

- Appointment of dedicated nurses certified by the World Council of Enterostomal Therapists, covering colostomy care and incontinence dermatitis nursing, providing hospital dressing statistics, consultations, and family health education. Assistance is also offered to vulnerable groups for applying for National Health Insurance covered dressings.
- Telemedicine Wound Clinics were established in collaboration with 10 foster institutions, using the official Line App for special appointment video consultation. Physicians diagnose the wounds and determine suitable treatment methods, followed by wound care nurses explaining care procedures and arranging follow-up appointments, with medical records and photographs kept for reference. After the video consultation, institutional staff are instructed to visit the hospital for payment and to collect dressings and medications.

CONCLUSIONS

- The use of various wound treatment devices and dressings improved patient satisfaction, reduced in-hospital wound care pressure.
- Following the application of telemedicine outpatient services, further integrated family medicine, long-term care, and home medical services, reducing patients' hospital wait times, discomfort from outings, and the consumption of human and social resources, aligning with the development and concept of ESG.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- The author thanks all the staff at the Wound Care Center for their dedication to various wound research and services.
- Thank you for publishing remote healthcare-related articles in the International Wound Journal.



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