Teleaudiology and Tele-supervision: A Viable Match?

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COI Disclosure:
Barbara Vento
- No financial relationship to the topic
- Non financial relationships:
  - Prior founding member of ASHA SIG #18
  - Member of ASHA SIG #18 Editorial Committee
  - Faculty of University of Pittsburgh, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (with E. Cohn)
  - Has co-authored presentations on university curricular imperatives for teleaudiology and is a member of the AAA Clinical Education Sub Committee.

COI Disclosure (financial):
Ellen Cohn
- Receives partial salary support from RERC on Telerehabilitation at University of Pittsburgh RERC on Telerehabilitation funded by NIDRR Department of Education, Washington DC, Grant # H133E090002
- Developing product with commercialization possibilities and potential financial interest
- Book in press (Springer), Telerehabilitation, for which there might be royalties. Members of this panel (Tindall, Brown) have authored chapters.

COI Disclosure (non-financial):
Ellen Cohn
- Editor of International Journal of Telerehabilitation, open source journal published by University of Pittsburgh
- Chair, ASHA SIG 18 Telepractice
- Chair (through May 1, 2012) ATA Telerehabilitation SIG and co-chair License inter-operability subcommittee
- ATA, accepted nomination for Board of Directors (election in progress).
- Faculty colleague of Barbara Vento. Interact on the topic with panelists Tindall, Gregg and Brown via ATA and ASHA.

Can Telepractice Address Critical Audiology Needs?
- We need to increase the number of audiologists with the growing number of elderly and the early identification of infants and children with hearing loss.
- Audiology training programs therefore need to increase the number of students in their programs.
- Operating limitation: to find good clinical training sites willing to take and supervise students on a regular basis.

Source: (Personal Communication, B. Vento, 2012)

Telepractice and Year of Training (AuD.)
- Does this work for 1st year students?
  - No; they would benefit most from direct 1 on 1 supervision.
- 2nd year AuD students?
  - Yes with cooperative adults and basic Audiologic testing. Might even be at remote sites if student is at high level of competency.
- 3rd year students?
  - Perhaps even be possible with children is certain situations
  - Would allow for greater independence in the 3rd year student.
- In all cases, supervision would be by video observation of the student doing testing, rehab/ in another room or remote site.

Source: (Personal Communication, B. Vento, 2012)
We know that there are areas in need of remote audiology services: ranging from newborn hearing screening to aural rehabilitation.

- Is it possible to have a student do the remote visit while “supervised” by the supervisor back in the city/home base?
- Does this count for clinical “hours?”
- Is this “close enough” supervision?

Source: (Personal Communication, B. Vento, 2012)

Teleaudiology methods and videoconferencing can support the tele-supervision of AuD students.

However, the practice is in the early stages; numerous challenges exist.

It is important to establish a model, consistent nomenclature, training and evaluation.

The principles herein apply to tele-supervision of SLP students and other disciplines.

An evolving nomenclature.
- Tele-supervision:
  - Use of tele-technology to supervise telepractitioners
- E-supervision:
  - Use of tele-technology to supervise “in-person” therapy, at a distance (far or near).

What type of session is being supervised?
- In-person session
- Telepractice session

Where is the clinician?
Where is the client?
Where is the supervisor?

Is the observation synchronous or asynchronous?
Is the feedback synchronous or asynchronous?

**Tele-supervision: Type 1**

a. **Synchronous supervision of telepractice using “tele” methods.**
   - a few corporations with nationwide practices; a few universities.
   - e.g.: therapist in Georgia; client in Texas; supervisor in Maine.

b. **Asynchronous supervision of telepractice using “tele” methods.**
   - e.g.: an employee develops a “portfolio” or the system records sessions for later viewing.

**Tele-supervision: Type 2**

- **Synchronous, in-person supervision of telepractice.**
  - A student clinician engages in telepractice
  - Their supervisor observes “in-person.”
E-supervision: Type 1

- **Synchronous:**
  A student is observed via a centralized panel of monitors; an observation room transmits sound over the Internet (perhaps recording sessions as well) could qualify. [I view tele-technology more broadly than some others...]
- **Asynchronous:**
  Via store and forward (e.g., taped sessions; audio; paperwork) data is transmitted via the Internet.

E–Supervision: Type 2

- **Synchronous:**
  A supervisor at a University “meets” with a student at a distance, and perhaps with their onsite supervisor to touch base concerning their progress.
- **Asynchronous:**
  The meeting above occurs – a recorded tape is transmitted to the University.
- **Hybrid Models Required:**
  At the semester mid-point, the University clinical coordinator “meets” with a student at a distance, and perhaps with their onsite supervisor to touch base concerning their progress delivering telepractice.

University Applications

- **Tele–Supervision of Far–flung (US; international) or Local Audiology Students**
  - University Coordinators of Academic Clinical Practice could observe meetings between students and distant clinical supervisors
  - University Coordinators of Academic Clinical Practice train and supervise onsite supervisors (or tele-supervisors)

Challenges: Entwined with Current Telepractice

- Limitations imposed by state laws and state practice acts
- International considerations
- State license portability issues
  - Applications
  - Maintenance
- Reimbursement for telepractice
- HIPAA/Privacy considerations
- Malpractice (?)

Challenges: Related to Tele–supervision

- Professional association/accreditation body acceptance
- Trained supervisory workforce. Tele-supervision requires knowledge of:
  - Content area
  - Telepractice
  - Supervisory techniques
  - Telesupervision

Opportunities Abound

- Tele–supervision models
- Tele–supervision human resources
  - Staff evaluation
  - Tele–supervision research
  - Comparative effectiveness research
  - Readiness for telesupervision
  - Client, student/clinician/supervisor/institution(s)
  - Satisfaction
- University training grants
- Tele-supervisory ethics

“In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity.”
– Albert Einstein