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**Abstract**

**OBJECTIVE:**

It is unclear if telepsychiatry, a subset of telemedicine, increases access to mental health care for inmates in correctional facilities or decreases costs for clinicians or facility administrators. The purpose of this investigation was to determine how utilization of telepsychiatry affected access to care and costs of providing mental health care in correctional facilities.

**METHODS:**

A literature review complemented by a semistructured interview with a telepsychiatry practitioner. Five electronic databases, the National Bureau of Justice, and the American Psychiatric Association Web sites were searched for this research, and 49 sources were referenced. The literature review examined implementation of telepsychiatry in correctional facilities in Arizona, California, Georgia, Kansas, Ohio, Texas, and West Virginia to determine the effect of telepsychiatry on inmate access to mental health services and the costs of providing mental health care in correctional facilities.

**RESULTS:**

Telepsychiatry provided improved access to mental health services for inmates, and this increase in access is through the continuum of mental health care, which has been instrumental in increasing quality of care for inmates. Use of telepsychiatry saved correctional facilities from \$12,000 to more than \$1 million. The semistructured interview with the telepsychiatry practitioner supported utilization of telepsychiatry to increase access and lower costs of providing mental health care in correctional facilities.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Increasing access to mental health care for this underserved group through telepsychiatry may improve living conditions and safety inside correctional facilities. Providers, facilities, and state and federal governments can expect increased savings with utilization of telepsychiatry.