Telemedicine in rural ER tied to fewer physician Rx errors

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(HealthDay)—For seriously ill and injured children, the use of telemedicine consultations in rural emergency departments is associated with fewer physician-related medication errors, according to a study published online Nov. 25 in *Pediatrics*.

Madan Dharmar, M.B.B.S., Ph.D., from the University of California Davis in Sacramento, and colleagues retrospectively reviewed the charts of 234 seriously ill and injured children presenting to eight rural emergency departments with access to pediatric critical care physicians from an academic children's hospital. Two pediatric pharmacists identified physician-related emergency department medication errors; the frequency of errors for children receiving telemedicine consultations, telephone consultations, and no consultations was compared.

The researchers found that 73, 85, and 76 patients received telemedicine consultations, telephone consultations, and no specialist consultations, respectively. There were significantly fewer physician-related medication errors for patients who received telemedicine consultations (3.4 percent), compared to patients who received telephone consultations (10.8 percent) or no consultations (12.5 percent; P

"This reduction in medication errors can potentially lead to improved outcomes and/or lower health care costs, although our study does not directly address these question," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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