BACKGROUND

1. DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, TELEHEALTH HAS BECOME A WIDESPREAD SOLUTION TO CONNECTING MEDICAL PROVIDERS TO PATIENTS, BUT OLDER ADULTS OFTEN ENCOUNTER BARRIERS TO ACCESS

2. UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES OF OLDER ADULTS’ EXPERIENCES IS VITAL TO SERVING THIS HIGH NEEDS POPULATION

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Conversations with Older Adults

17 interviews were conducted with older adults asking about experiences using telemedicine prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3 used telemedicine prior to COVID-19
8 used telemedicine during COVID-19

16 out of 17 preferred in-person visits

Of these, 4 would agree to telemedicine if necessary

What’s missing from telehealth?

Respondents called out...

Convenience

Technology often doesn’t work like it is supposed to.
In-person visits offer opportunity for immediate lab tests or exams.

Comfort & Connection

Telemedicine feels rushed and not as intimate.
Patients want a trusting, genuine connection with a provider.

How can we improve and what are the challenges?

- Offer digital literacy training
  - Requires dedicated staff and significant time investment
- Provide access to required technology and devices
  - Financial and logistical burden
- Ensure access to in-person assistance for older adults using telemedicine
  - Not always available for all older adults