



Development of a Post-Discharge Telehealth Program to Enhance Home-Based Therapy Adherence in Stroke Rehabilitation

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Introduction

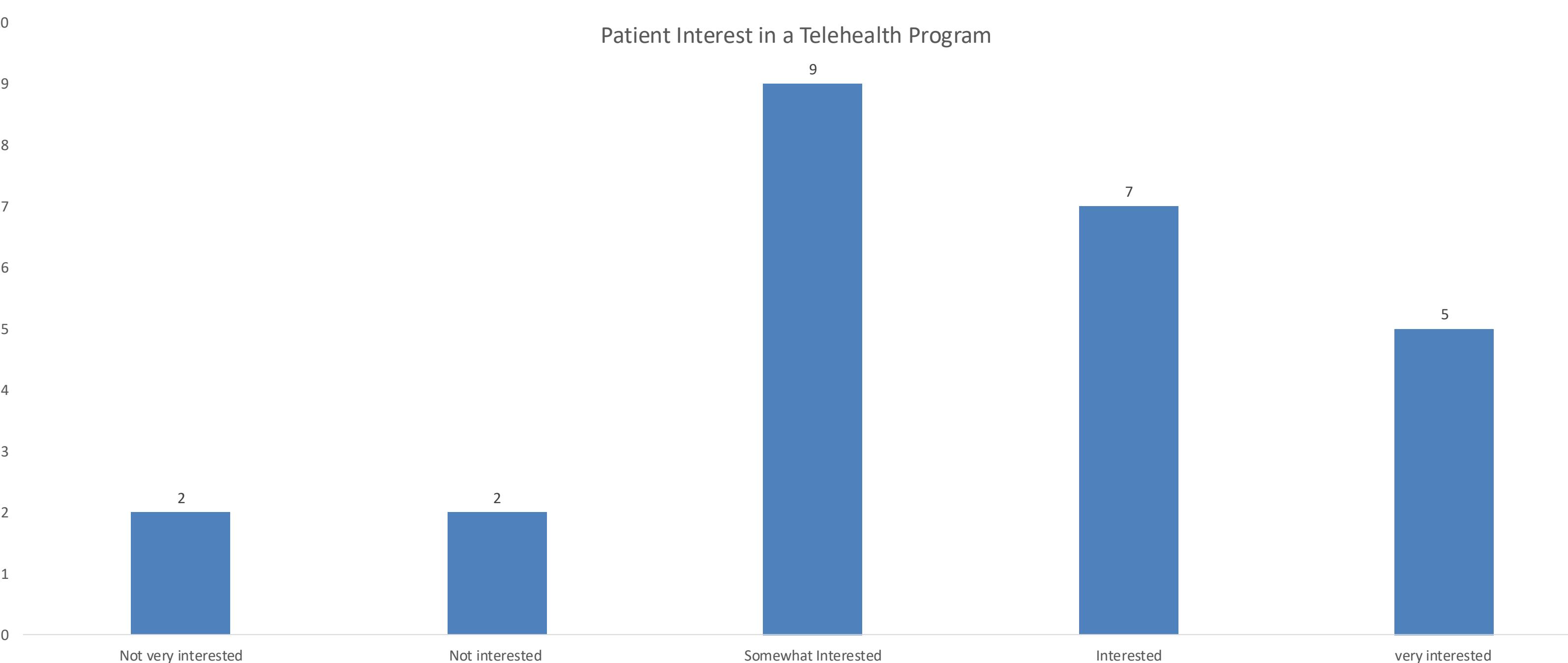
- 7.8 million adults in the United States have experienced a stroke.²
- 83% of individuals who have experienced a stroke perceive restrictions in engaging in daily activities.¹
- Community reintegration is often a challenge individuals who have experienced a stroke face, yet it is one of the most important aspects of post-stroke recovery.³
- The purpose of this project was two-fold:
 - Identify patient level of interest, resource accessibility, and potential barriers to telehealth engagement for post-stroke recovery after being discharged to home.
 - Obtain perspectives from outpatient therapists regarding the potential benefits, barriers, and feasibility of implementing telehealth follow-up services

Methods

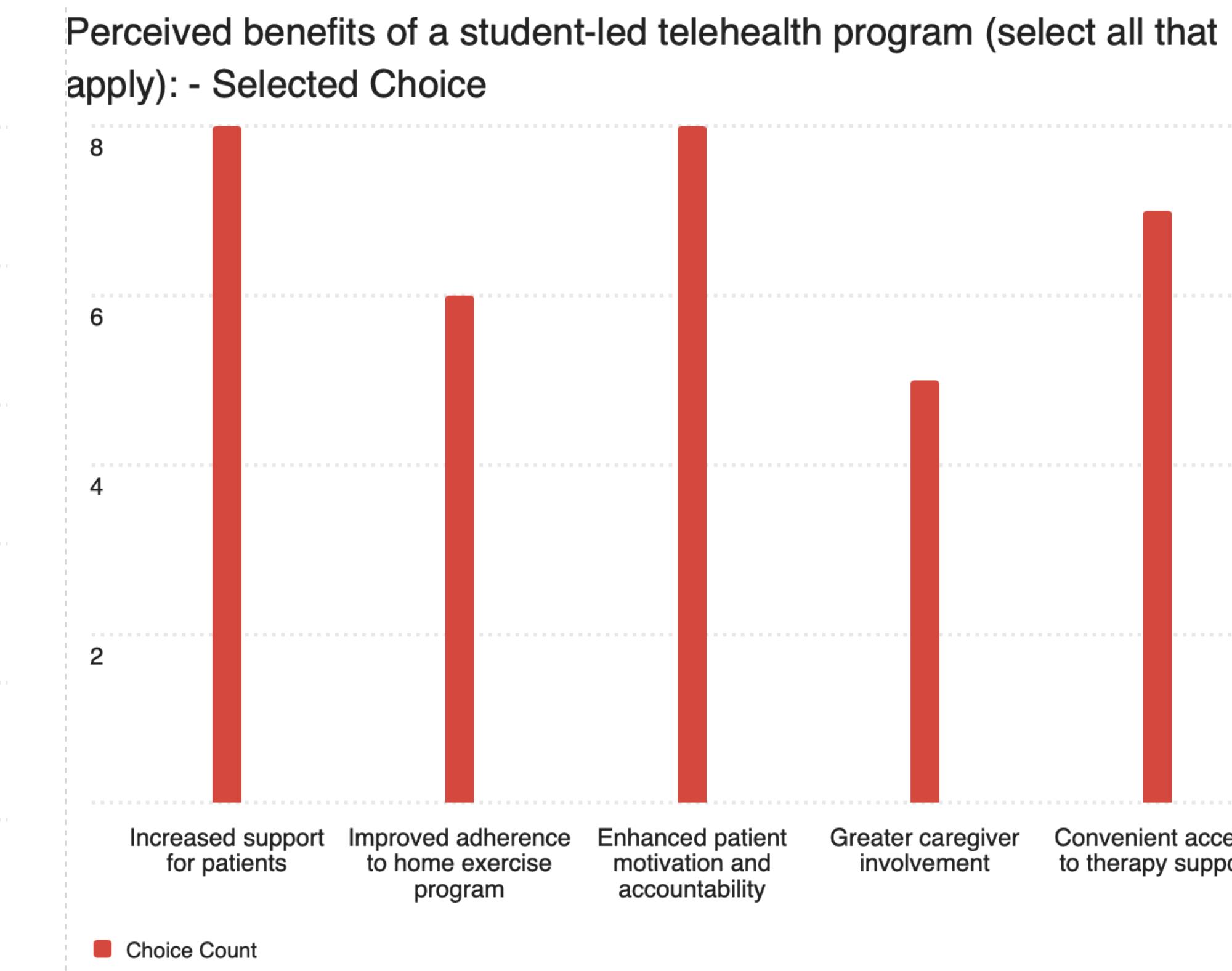
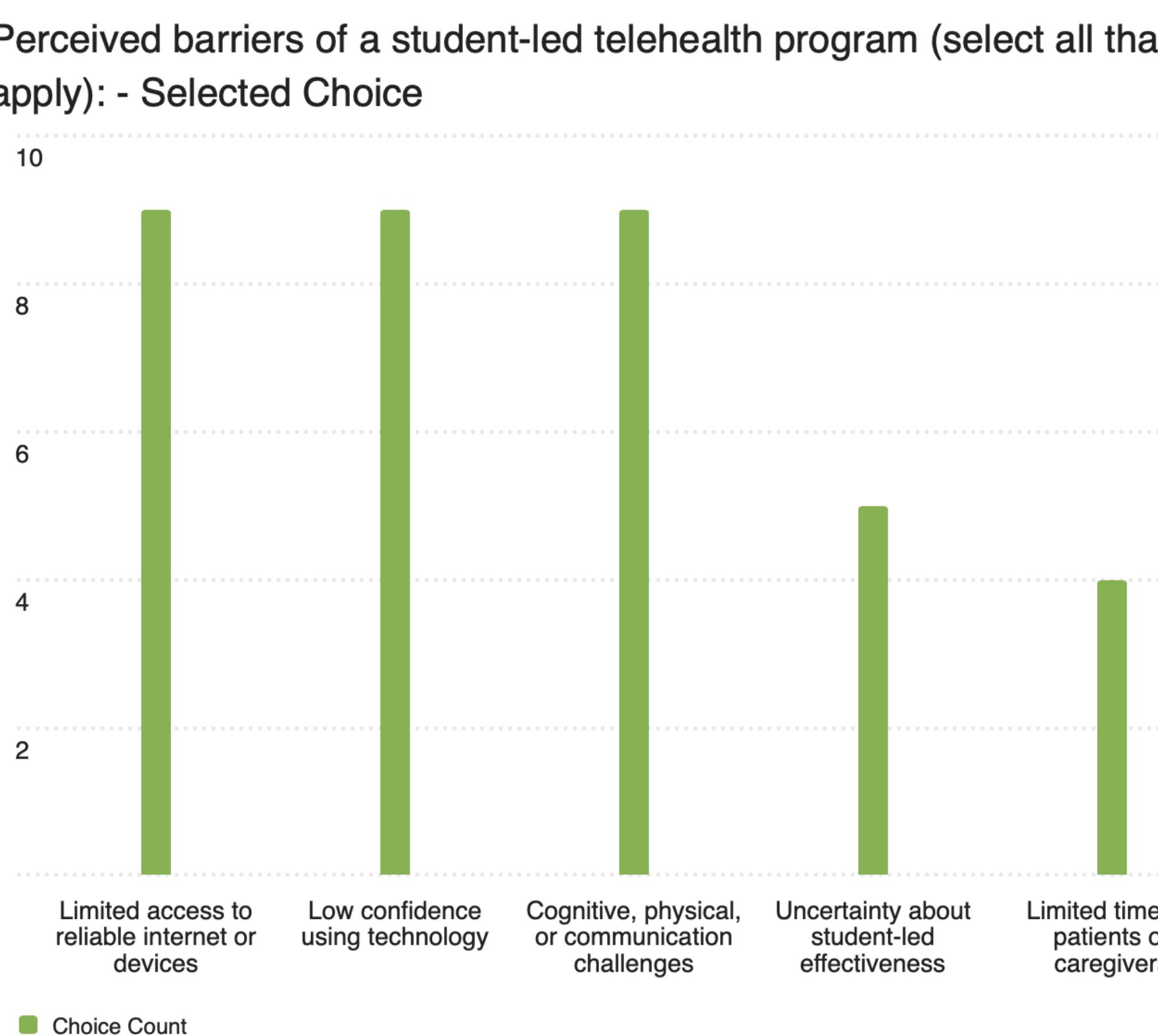
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with stroke survivors (n=25) who completed inpatient rehabilitation at UAB Spain Rehabilitation Center to examine interest in telehealth, access to resources, and potential barriers to engagement.
- A Qualtrics survey was emailed to occupational, physical, and speech therapists (n=10) who work in the outpatient therapy clinic at UAB to gather perspectives on the necessity, feasibility, and preferred structure of a post-discharge telehealth program.

Results

Findings from patient interviews indicate overall interest in telehealth follow-up for continued support and motivation after discharge. Commonly identified barriers include limited technology access, uncertainty about digital platforms, and concerns regarding current state of recovery.



Data from the therapist survey revealed that most therapist participants viewed telehealth positively, identifying benefits such as improved patient support, increased adherence to home programs, and enhanced motivation. However, common concerns included patient access to reliable technology, confidence using digital platforms, and the logistics of a student-led telehealth model.



Discussion

Understanding both patient and therapist perspectives is a crucial first step toward developing an effective telehealth program to enhance post-discharge continuity of care for stroke survivors.

Findings from the project can help plan next steps for telehealth initiatives at UAB in hopes to promote home program adherence, strengthen the role of rehabilitation professionals in long-term recovery, and reduce hospital readmissions.

Conclusion

Both patients and therapists indicated strong interest in a telehealth follow-up program to support recovery after discharge. Identified challenges such as technology access, digital confidence, and the need for structured training highlight the importance of piloting a well-designed telehealth model to enhance long-term outcomes.

Continued collaboration between rehabilitation professionals, students, and institutional leadership will be essential to ensure effective implementation and sustainability of a post-discharge telehealth program that will align with clinical best practices.

Acknowledgement & Contact information

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References Available upon request