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Assessing Empathy in Patient-Clinician Interactions on an Asynchronous Telemedicine Platform

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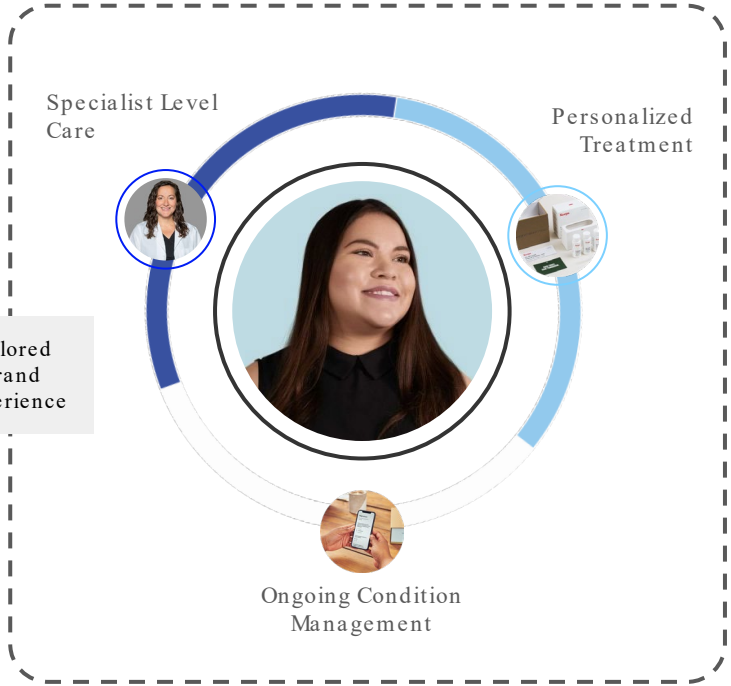
4. *The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab*
5. *KMC*

Across all of our offerings, our integrated care model is designed with **patients at the center.**



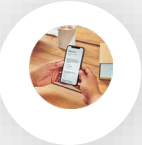
OUR UNIQUE END-TO-END CARE MODEL

Specialist Level Care

30M providers deliver top-line care via a largely asynchronous model to increase access.

Personalized Treatment

Primarily generics shipped to home to drive affordability and convenience.



Ongoing Condition Management

Unlimited access to care team and resources to ensure behavior change and superior outcomes.

CONTENTS

01 Study Objectives

02 Methods

03 Results

04 Conclusions

01. Study Objectives

There is a lack of robust evidence related to how clinician empathy is perceived in a virtual care setting, and even more so for an asynchronous care model. For this study, we set-out to:

1. Adapt a standard provider empathy scale to asynchronous telemedicine

2. Describe the level of provider empathy as perceived by patients across various specialty care encounters delivered through an asynchronous care model

Study design

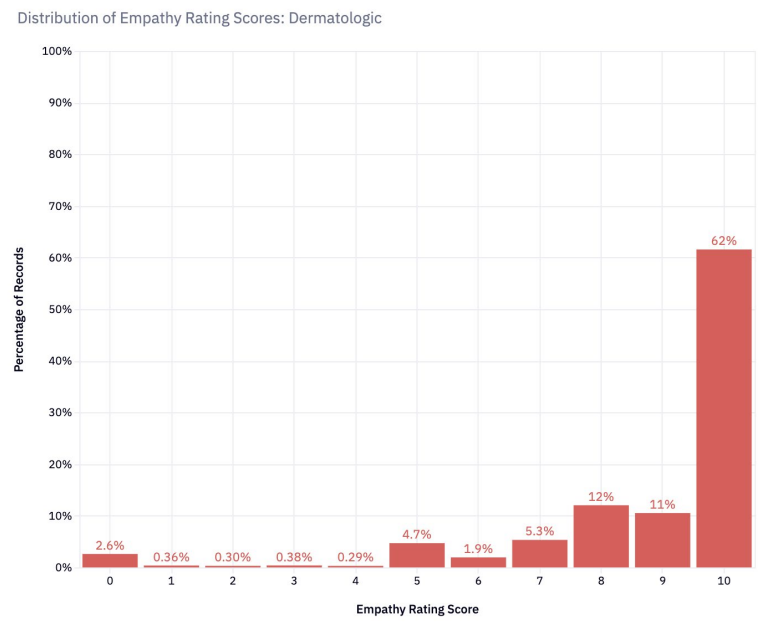
- A retrospective study was conducted to evaluate patients who enrolled in an asynchronous multi-specialty telemedicine platform, Thirty Madison

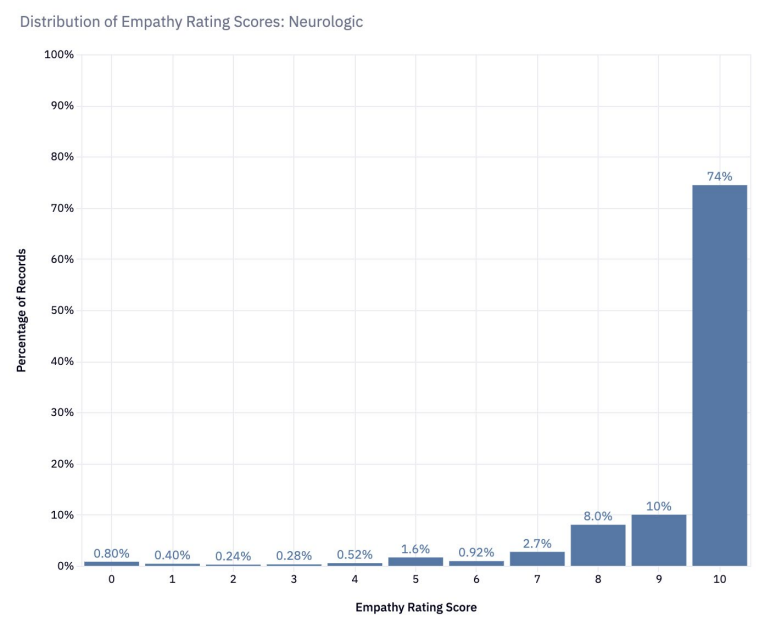
Keeps Men's Hair Loss	FACET Inflammatory Derm (Psoriasis, Eczema)	cove Migraine

- To establish a measure of provider empathy, we combined two JSPPPE questions into one and posed it to patients: "My doctor understands my emotions, feelings and concerns and asks about what is happening in my daily life."
- This question was included in opt-in surveys sent to established patients after provider interactions asking them to rate their perception of provider empathy on scale of 0-10

Jefferson Scale of Patient Perceptions of Physician Empathy [JSPPPE]

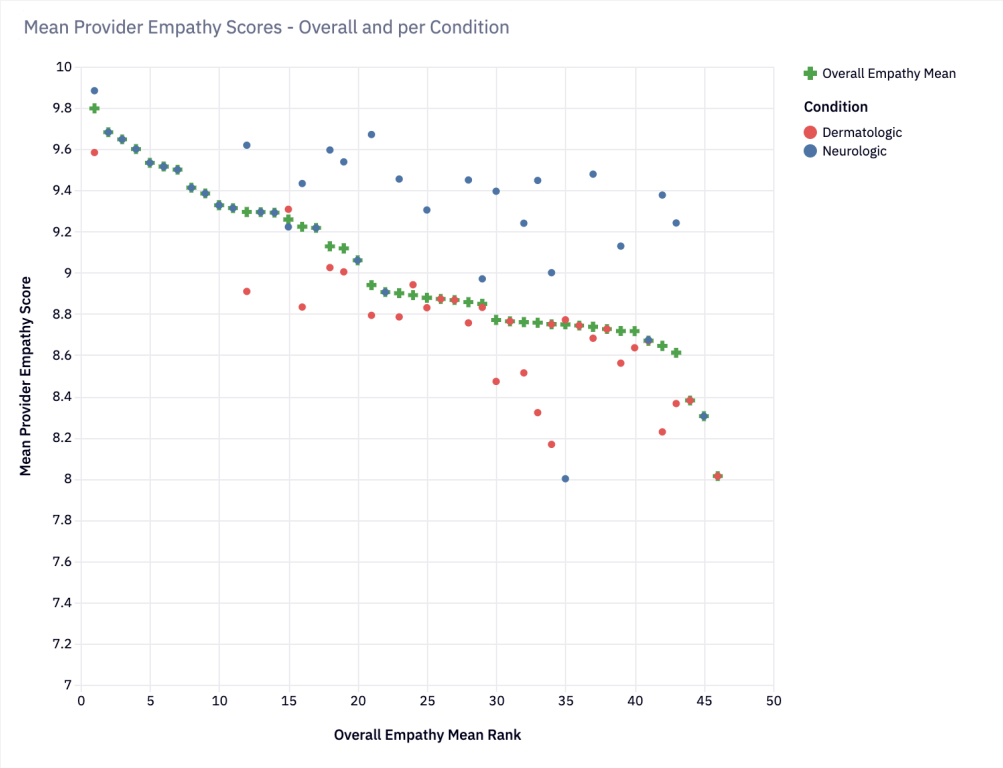
03. Results





- 10,483 patient responses (76% dermatologic, 24% neurologic) over a 6-month period
- **Average empathy score was 8.93** (8.82 dermatologic, 9.35 neurologic); the neurologic service line necessitates increased provider interactions relative to the dermatologic service line
- 85.9% of overall ratings being 8 points or higher

03. Results



- The **most active providers had high empathy scores** (100% of these providers had an average empathy score above 8); these included 49 clinicians with 10+ responses (range 15-1,030 responses per clinician) during the study
- **Increased provider interactions may be associated with increased empathy scores**; cases where a provider has worked in both services, the Neurologic score is typically higher than the same provider's Dermatologic score
- Empathy was **highly correlated with likelihood of recommendation** (measure of NPS); correlation coefficient=0.88

04. Conclusions

- **Empathetic asynchronous care model:** Provider empathy thrives in an asynchronous telemedicine care model and is perceived by patients in the absence of non-verbal communication
- **Increased provider interactions may contribute to empathetic care:** More asynchronous clinician interactions related to a patient's medical history may contribute to increased empathy perception
- **Perceived empathy correlated with increased patient recommendation:** Patients likelihood of recommending their provider was highly correlated with feeling understood
- **Future studies:**
  - Evaluate if correlation exists between perceived provider empathy and clinical outcomes
  - Seek to formalize and validate an adapted scale in asynchronous clinical practice