

**UCLA** School of Nursing

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# Lessons on Tele-therapy for Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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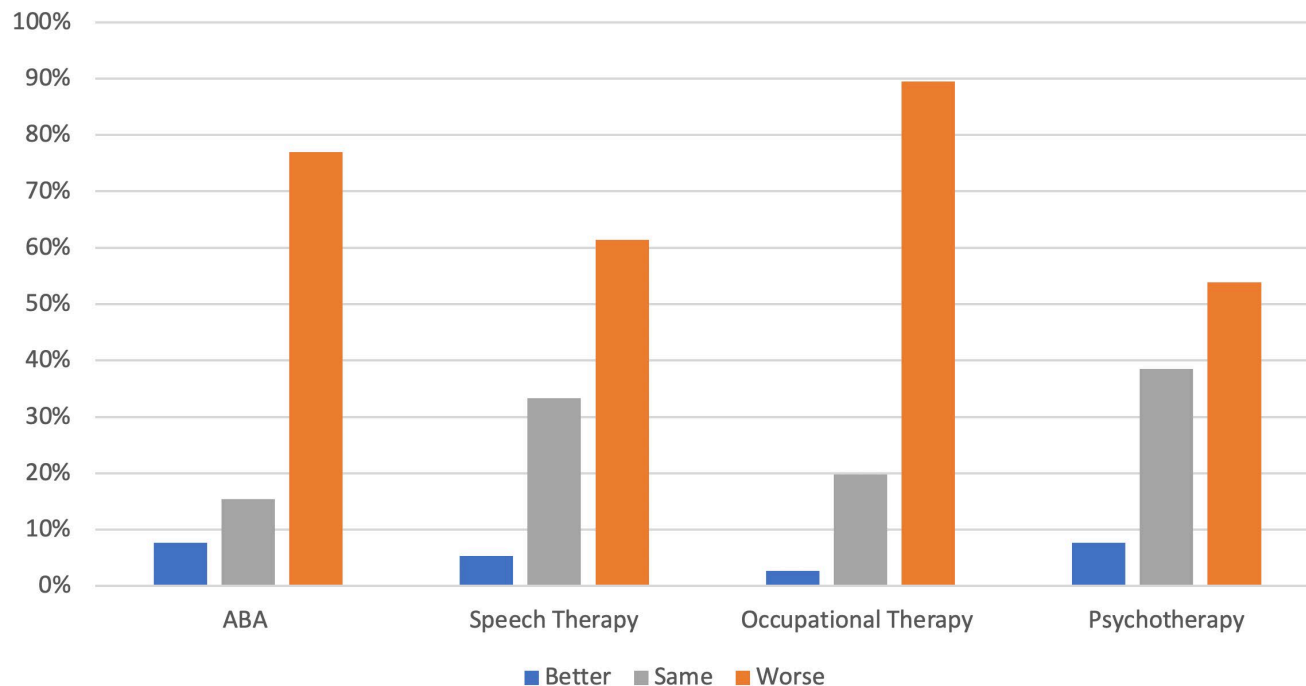
# Acknowledgements

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# Family experiences of tele-therapy are mixed

Tele-Therapy Compared to In-Person Therapy



## Pandemic Context:

- Worsened parent mental health
- Worsened child behavioral health
- High levels of service loss or delay (50-60% health, mental health, or childcare)

# Who Benefited from Tele-therapy?

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## Less Favorable Tele-therapy Appraisal

- Higher caregiving strain

## More Favorable Tele-therapy Appraisal

- Higher COVID-related stress
- Older child age
- Multiple children with a disability

# Tele-therapy Access and Equity

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Post-COVID...

Behavioral telehealth is often being used by health systems to expand options for those who ***already had access to care***—but less often used to create new means of access for those who did not.

# Moving Forward

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- How to sustain ***high-quality*** tele-therapy options for families who can benefit from this modality
  - Technology infrastructure – platforms/apps that integrate with existing healthcare technology
  - Insurance reimbursement policies – tele-health is temporarily reimbursable by Medicare and Medicaid, but varies by state and future is uncertain
  - Provider training

# Moving Forward

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- Leveraging telehealth to ***increase access*** and ***address unmet needs*** among marginalized populations
  - Cultural appropriateness of telehealth services in marginalized communities
  - Consider what it takes: Hardware, software, internet bandwidth, physical space, privacy, quiet/distraction-free environment, parent involvement
  - Leveraging community assets – e.g., schools/school-based health centers, churches, community centers, etc.

# Moving Forward

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- Addressing *upstream drivers* of disparities in mental health care and outcomes that have worsened during COVID-19
  - Policies/incentives to grow behavioral health workforce (e.g., social workers, psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners & dual mental health certification)
  - Childcare policies
  - New interventions to support the mental health of parents of children with intellectual/developmental disabilities



# Thank You

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