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Advanced Bionics Remote Programming

Presenter: Kristin Kozlowski, AuD

Music

Music

Hey everyone. Thank you for joining today's virtual introductory workshop training. My name is Katie Baden. I work in education and training at Advanced Bionics and I'm really pleased you could join us today to learn more about AB's remote programming. As a reminder, we have resources that you can download to support your learning today.

There is a notes page if you'd like to take notes about remote programming and write down any clinical tips and tricks that you learned today, feel free to use that resource. There are handouts of the slides so you can refer back to what we talk about today and any research and resources that are going to help you clinically as you use remote programming in your clinical practice that that's available as well.

Here you can see the risk and benefits associated with today's training.

Here are the Learning Outcomes There are three learning outcomes focused on remote programming and here are the disclosures for the speakers you will hear from today.

Many of you know that at ab we really appreciate your feedback. So here you have a QR code. You can use the QR code or the web link in the chat to access today's course evaluation. We would love your feedback. It takes under a minute to complete.

It's three short questions. So if you could go ahead and open it up so that at the end of today's course you can give us your feedback, we'd really appreciate it.

And with that, I'd really like to introduce today's speakers. Today we're honored to have Kristin Kozlowski join us to talk about remote programming. Kristin is a clinical audiologist at Froeder Hospital at the Medical College of Wisconsin and she has lots of experience with remote programming and has agreed to share her clinical experience with us now because of her busy clinic schedule and the potential time zone differences between where she is and when. We are presenting this live. We have recorded Kristen's portion of today's presentation, but AB Education and training team members are here with you live to to answer any questions that you have, to review any concepts with you.

And in addition to myself, we are joined by my colleague Lori Hambrick.

We did still choose to offer this course live to you because we definitely think that your participation and engagement with the learning process is really helpful so you can engage with us, ask your questions, use the Zoom Q and A to type your questions in the chat. We're going to answer as many possible questions as we can today. You can also use the Zoom chat to learn from other people's questions so others may have questions that you maybe hadn't thought of, but can learn from as well. And then we have tried to make today's training as engaging as possible by introducing polls and and giving you the opportunity to interact with today's content and recheck on the things and the concepts that we're teaching. So hopefully all of this will increase your participation and your learning experience.

Now I'd like to turn it over to Dr. Kristin Kozlowski, who's going to review the topic of AB's remote programming and share her clinical experience with you.

Hi, my name is Kristen Kozlowski and I'm an adult cochlear implant audiologist with the Medical College of Wisconsin, which is located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. And I'm going to talk to you today about a topic that I feel quite passionate about, and that's clinical considerations for Remote programming. Our clinic has been using remote programming with Advanced Bionics for about a year or a little more than that now, and I've enjoyed seeing the ways that we can incorporate this service into our clinical practice.

And I'm also also excited to see and share the benefits that we see with patients that we work with. Advanced Bionics offers the only universally connected Sound processor, and 97% of hearing care professionals agree that Advanced Bionics Cochlear implants connects to more personal devices than any other cochlear implant.

Currently, only Advanced Bionics offers complete synchronous remote programming due to unique Bluetooth capabilities using the AB remote support app, which turns the recipient's smartphone into a wireless programming interface for remote programming.

How many of you have used telehealth for you or your family or for any of your personal healthcare appointments this year? If you're on the live webinar and willing to share, please type in yes into the chat.

Great. Thank you for your answers. Now, what percentage of adults do you think use telehealth services in a given year? If you're on the live webinar, please type your answers into the chat.

Great. Thank you for your answers again.

Did you know that approximately 43% of the world's population and about 19% of Americans resides in rural regions? Did you know that elderly are even more likely to live in rural regions? We all know these communities often face unique challenges, including limited access to specialized health care services and support for individuals who rely on cochlear implant technology for their hearing. The ability to program and adjust their devices remotely could make all the difference.

The global pandemic really made healthcare professionals look at and adapt the their patient care delivery models, including pivoting to telehealth. Data from the National Health Interview survey found that 37% of adults used telehealth in 2021 and that telehealth usage increased with age.

Let's think about some of the most common reasons why cochlear implant patients miss their appointments. If you're on the live webinar, please type in some of those reasons into the chat.

Great. Thanks for your participation. So some common barriers to accessing health care include coexisting health conditions which could make it difficult to schedule multiple appointments or to ambulate around a clinic space. Living in rural areas far away from the cochlear implant center, it could just be difficult for that patient to come in. They might be intimidated to drive long distances, or they might just be dependent on family or other ride services to bring them in.

These days, families and working professionals are quite busy and also retirees are very active and it does make scheduling appointments a little harder. And then recipients might experience challenges with child care. And that's both parents who have small children and also grandparents who also take a larger role in child care these days.

Remote Programming for Recipients with Marvel CI provides complete, convenient programming sessions for follow up appointments. A programming session can be conducted in real time in the recipient's own environment rather than traveling to the clinic.

The AB remote support app turns your patient's smartphone into a NOAA link wireless, allowing for full remote programming. Using Target CI version 1.5, the hearing care provider can remotely make adjustments and provide counseling on device use and rehabilitation opt.

So all patients need to have at least one in person appointment prior to remote programming. And again, that's because that processor needs to be programmed in that specific version of target CI version 1.5. So at that in person appointment you can set your patient up for success with remote programming by helping them download and pair their devices to the AB remote support app. And also

you can give them a consumer remote programming guide which AB has in case they need additional support during a remote programming appointment.

Remote programming can be a discussion topic throughout the patient journey to receiving a cochlear implant, even early on in the evaluation process. So by introducing it early on, it helps the future recipient and the hearing care professional gauge interest in remote programming. Our clinic even had a patient who was so interested in the option of remote programming that sometime between the initial evaluation and the activation appointment, they went out and purchased a smartphone so that they could utilize the service in the future. At initial fitting of the Cochlear implant, you can assist your patient in downloading and pairing the AB remote support app. And that's another great time where you can discuss remote programming, what it is, when they might want to use it, and how they would get set up to use it.

And then at follow up appointments, remote programming can be used in real time in the patient's environment instead of traveling into the clinic.

Thank you for providing information on remote programming and the patient journey and also specifically sharing that story about your patient who was so excited that they went and bought a smartphone. It's great to hear that they're so eager to utilize this service. So what do you consider when you decide when you're deciding whether or not to offer a remote programming session to your CI recipients? So that's a great question. I used to think that young tech savvy patients would be the people who would be interested and then those people who live really far away from the clinic, but that's not generally the case.

So as you can see in the example I just provided, even patients who didn't own a smartphone to begin with are interested in using remote programming. So now when a patient comes in or calls the clinic to ask for a programming adjustment, I don't really have any issues offering that virtually as long as I know

that they have had the app set up and connected their devices at a previous appointment and they've been vers and they have been programmed in that version of Target CI. Great. Thank you for sharing your experience. I think a lot of people have initial thoughts about who may want to participate in remote programming and hearing about how that's actually going in your clinic and that you're seeing patients that you hadn't initially thought would be interested.

Having great interest in this service. Yeah, yeah. It's been really exciting and interesting to see all of the ages and the distances. Even people close to home like to use it. And both patients, young and old, are really utilizing the service.

Well, fantastic. Thank you.

So let's walk through how you would complete a remote programming session. First, when joining the session, the recipient will open up the AB remote support app. If the hearing devices haven't been connected to the app, that step can be done now. Otherwise, if the devices have been previously connected, the recipient will simply join the waiting room by clicking the appointment tab at the bottom of the screen.

On the professional side, Target CI will be open and a patient file selected and then the professional just has to click Start remote support to begin the session.

During the fitting session, the recipient will see the provider in the app just like a video call and will follow the instructions given by the clinician.

Professionals can conduct the programming session like they would an in person visit because you have full remote programming functionalities, so anything you can do in the office you can do remotely.

When the session is finished, the recipient selects done. When their hearing care provider has finished the call, the hearing care provider can save and close the programming session and then you can continue to talk to the patient and give instructions if you want via the video call. And then if you find that you need to make some more adjustments, you can reconnect the session or if you're ready, you can end the call.

AB conducted a multi center clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of remote programming with Marvel CI with the goal of determining whether hearing performance is similar in programs created with remote programming versus an in person visit. So the graph on the left shows that the mean Azbio score for an in person visit, which is in gray, was not significantly different than the outcomes from a remotely programmed visit in blue. So that means that the clinical outcomes with remote programming were no different whether they were performed in person or via remote programming. And then information on the right side of the screen shows the programming durations were similar between the in person and the remote visits, that remote programming offers cost and time savings for the recipient compared to an in person visit, and that patients liked remote programming.

The University of Chile also evaluated the usability, effectiveness and acceptability of remote programming in their patient population. Participants were given subjective assessments and asked to report the strength of the agreement on a five point liker scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The results indicate that the ease and use of communication was good, the resulting program was acceptable, and opinions toward remote programming were positive. Looking at these results overall, we can say that participants reported high levels of satisfaction with remote programming from above.

Utilization of remote programming for advanced bionics recipients has many benefits including increased access to care for those who live far away, convenience and flexibility for busy schedules,

the ability to have real world adjustments in a more natural setting because how many times have you had a patient in your office that says, well, when I'm here things sound great, but when I go out into the real world things sound very different, so you get to remove that variable and give them a little bit more real world programming. Remote programming also gives the recipient the option to reduce travel time and expenses related to travel and ultimately gives the recipient the freedom to choose where they receive their health care. The Medical College of Wisconsin where I practice recently conducted a survey that looks at patient and clinician satisfaction and benefits when using remote programming. And overwhelmingly, adult patients noted that it was convenient, it was easy to use, and they would use it again. Participants also liked that it saved time and travel expenses.

Many patients that I see in the clinic depend on a ride service or a family member to bring them in. And many older adults feel a lot of guilt for having their adult children take off time from work to bring them in for an appointment. So with remote programming, you're essentially allowing them access to that care without the guilt or the dependence on other people. Also, many people have difficulty ambulating around a large clinic space. And so for patients and families joining the appointment, the logistics can be really daunting.

So this service gives adults additional independence and freedom to be seen.

Hearing care Professionals may also see benefits from utilizing remote programming, including increased flexibility in when and where to provide the programming appointments, and the opportunity to continue to provide care to patients who may not otherwise be able to make it. And this includes patients who live at a distance. But our clinic has also been able to provide this for patients who live close, but wouldn't have been able to make it to an appointment due to ride issues, or maybe they live in a skilled nursing facility where the logistics of bringing that patient in would have been too difficult. So the clinician gets to provide that continuation of care when they otherwise might not be seeing the

patient, which is really nice. The study that we conducted here at mcw, as well as studies that I discussed earlier in this presentation, show that you can provide programming services that are as effective as in person appointments.

And patient satisfaction with remote programming is high. And as we know, happy patients mean happy providers. I see a lot of additional benefits of remote programming in the clinic. We've been able to offer remote programming as an option for advanced bionics recipients when they might otherwise be calling to cancel due to transportation, transportation issues, or the threat of inclement weather, which happens quite a bit in Wisconsin in the winter. As we encounter more patients who are looking for replacement or upgrade equipment, A lot of times we're encountering patients who need an appointment within the last six months in order to submit for that replacement equipment.

So being able to offer remote programming has helped save that patient an extra trip, but still allow us to provide the clinic note for insurance purposes. Remote programming appointments also tend to take less time, and I think that's for a few reasons. First, patients aren't arriving late to their appointments because, you know, parking traffic really gets in the way. Also, anecdotally, I think that when a patient comes in to have some minor adjustments done, I feel a little pressure to make it worth their while to come in or for having come into the appointment. So when you do a remote session with a patient, they have other things they want to be doing, so they'll have that session and then at the end they will leave very, very quickly because they have other things to do and other things going on in their lives.

AB offers a bunch of great resources for remote programming to help get you started if you haven't tried it yet. And this includes a professional quick guide, elearning and presentations and tools in the AB remote support app. As you're getting familiar with remote programming, you could also do what me and my colleagues did, which is program a clinic processor to a test patient and download the AB remote support app on your phone and then go in different offices and try it out yourself and just kind of

see what that video interface looks like for both the patient and the provider.

Thank you for reviewing the resources and also sharing your great idea to just practice in the clinic before actually moving forward with a session with the patient. What steps do you take to ensure that your patient is set up for success with remote programming?

Like I discussed earlier in the presentation, I set up the AB remote support app at the Music time I'm seeing the patient in the office, usually at activation or at an upgrade appointment. And that's a really great time to discuss remote programming, how they would go about using it, and how they would request this service. After initial activation, we offer the next follow up visit, which is two weeks after activation, to be a remote visit for patients who have advanced bionics cochlear implants. And I'd say about 50% of our patients choose a remote programming visit at that appointment. For patients who aren't interested at that time, that's fine.

The nice thing is you've discussed it with them and you'd be surprised at how many people come back weeks or months later and just need a quick adjustment. And they'll say, hey, remember when we talked about that remote programming, could we do that? And because you've already had everything set up in the app, you're really ready to go. So then you can switch to it. Thanks for sharing that.

I really love that you are able to take the time and go ahead and download the app and talk to the patient about it. And then like you said, that also helps it really be front of mind. Even if they're not sure at first, maybe later they'll think about remote Programming as an option. Now in a situation where you maybe don't have time, say the patient was running a little late or the initial the other components of the initial activation took too long. Have you had your patients work with the AB Success team or AB support staff in to get them set up for remote programming?

Yes. So when when we don't get that, maybe they don't bring their smartphone, maybe they don't know their Apple ID so we can't download the app at that appointment. That happens quite frequently. So we have used AB Success and referred patients to to use them to have it set up. Also, that quick guide that I referenced earlier does have step by step instructions on how to set up the app and it's really easy as well.

So so we'll also give that to patients to use. Great. I'm glad to hear that like all things with technology, there may be some troubleshooting to work through. Let's identify the solutions for the situations for each recipient shown here. We'll use the answers across the bottom of the screen to provide a solution to the remote programming scenario at the top.

First is Jonas is connected to the remote programming session but reports the audio is unclear. We should ask Jonas to try to adjust the microphone and or volume settings. The next one is Marina is unable to pair her Marvel CI to the AV remote support app. Let's ask Marina to ensure Bluetooth is enabled on her phone. Phone calls and text notifications are interrupting the remote programming session with jp.

So let's ask JP to set the phone to do not disturb for the remote programming session. And then lastly Tina is connected to the remote programming session but the hearing care provider can't see her well. So we can ask Tina to adjust the camera and or body angle so we can see them better.

Determining whether a remote programming visit can be offered starts with the reason the recipient is calling and asking for a visit. If the patient is calling with a medical concern, obviously we want them to contact their healthcare provider if the recipient is calling for a follow up appointment or for fine tuning. Next let's talk to the patient about what they prefer if the patient prefers an in person appointment or the provider feels like maybe remote programming wouldn't be great for this patient. You know your patients best. Then offer them an in person appointment if the patient indicates that maybe a remote

programming session would be interesting to them.

Next we look at their technology so we want to make sure that they have access to WI fi and a compatible phone and that they have that app installed. And as we mentioned before if they don't have the app installed, if they have support that can help them get the app installed, including family members or AV success, that works great. For patients who don't have access to WI Fi. We've had some people get really creative. Different libraries have study rooms and they have WI Fi.

So we've had some patients who would go and do something like that if they don't have WI fi in their home. So that's been a nice solution too. So you can get a little creative with that option if you need to.

So if, if the recipient is interested in remote programming, has the technology or the ability to get the technology and has everything ready to go on their phone, feel free to offer them a remote. A remote programming visit because you can do everything that you would do in the office, in their home environment, or the environment that they choose.

Great. Thank you again for sharing all this fantastic information and also so much of your clinical experience. Having been involved in offering and conducting remote programming sessions for about a year now, I have one last question for you about remote programming. So what would you say to other professionals who are thinking that this sounds great, but they're a little nervous about trying it? Any last advice related to that?

Yeah, you're not alone. I think a lot of people are nervous about trying it. It's really easy. And I would say just try it. You could do what I had discussed earlier with, with my colleagues where we, we created a test patient and programmed a loaner processor and went into a different room and then initiated a visit just to see what it would look like.

I think that we all have patients that we have good rapport with and who are always eager to try new things. So if you have a patient that you'd feel comfortable saying, hey, there's this new service available, I want to try it. Would you mind being a test patient? And can we meet at this time? And this is how you do it.

I think a lot of patients are interested and eager to try new technology, and then that's a good way to get some feedback from that patient and also see how easy it is. I do acknowledge that it feels really intimidating to change your clinic flow and see how these things would actually work in your clinical practice. But patients have really enjoyed it. And clinicians, after they do it one time, or audiology students, we've even had them do some of the programming afterwards, they're like, oh, that was it. And I don't know what we're expecting, but yeah, it's fairly simple and it's kind of fun to be able to offer.

All right, thank you, Dr. Kozlowski, for sharing your clinical experience. As someone who spent 15 years in clinical CI practice, myself before teaching in our industry, I can tell you that my favorite way to learn is to learn from others who have using or who have personal experience with our products and software. Dr. Kozlowski did a great job of highlighting how she uses remote programming clinically and how it's benefiting her patients. Now, before we wrap up, I'd like to take the opportunity to have you complete a few poll questions for us. As this is the last webinar in our Virtual Intro workshop curriculum, I want you to take a moment again to reflect on your own CI clinical skills and your confidence with AB Technology.

If you joined us for the whole series, have had six weeks of learning and and you hopefully feel better prepared to use AB Technology and our services and solutions in your clinical practice. So I want you to look at the poll that we're pushing out now and rate your confidence with the following statements. Now, again, this poll is completely anonymous. Only you know how you rate yourself, but it gives us an idea of how most of you are feeling. Are you feeling one still that you don't have much confidence in

your own skill set using AB technology?

Or 5 Are you feeling very prepared and very confident that you now have the skills that you need to start using AB technology in your clinical practice? So look at the following statements and rate yourself on or your confidence and your skill set on a rating of 1 to 5. I'll give you a few minutes to do that.

Okay, thank you for those responses. I appreciate you taking the time to learn with us. As a reminder, I'm going to show you this slide again because your feedback is very valuable to us. So here is the QR code or you can use the link in your chat. We would love it if you would take the time to complete the course evaluation and give us your feedback on today's learning experience.

It's very short, three questions, it takes under a minute to complete, and we would appreciate hearing from you about what you thought of this learning experience.

All right, I will wrap up by thanking again Dr. Kozlowski for sharing her clinical experience with us, and I'd really like to thank all of you for taking time out of your schedules to join us and learn about remote programming. If you've joined us for the full introductory workshop series, we hope that this has been a valuable workshop for you and thank you for your time.