

Virtual Connections: Patient and staff experiences of video consultations in a community perinatal mental health service over 4 years

Dr Christine Torrance¹, Dr Amanullah Durrani²

¹ CT2 in Psychiatry, Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Larbert, Scotland

² Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrist, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde (GGC) Perinatal Mental Health Service, Scotland

Background

- NHS GGC is the UK's largest healthcare system, serving a population of around **1.4 million (21.4% of the Scottish population)**ⁱ
- Attend Anywhere (AA) is a secure online video consulting service that enables people to have health appointments from home or wherever is convenient; as such it is a key enabler in delivering Realistic Medicineⁱⁱ
- In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a rapid increase in the uptake of video consultations across all NHS specialties; within 4 months from March 2020, the number of video consultations had risen from **330 to 17,000 per week** nationallyⁱⁱⁱ
- The majority of consultations conducted by the GGC community Perinatal Mental Health Team (PNMHT) continue to be completed on Attend Anywhere and so opinions of the service remain an important tool for quality improvement

Objective

The aim of this project was to analyse responses from the surveys following Attend Anywhere video consultations within the NHS GGC Community PNMHT to identify common themes, issues and areas for service improvement

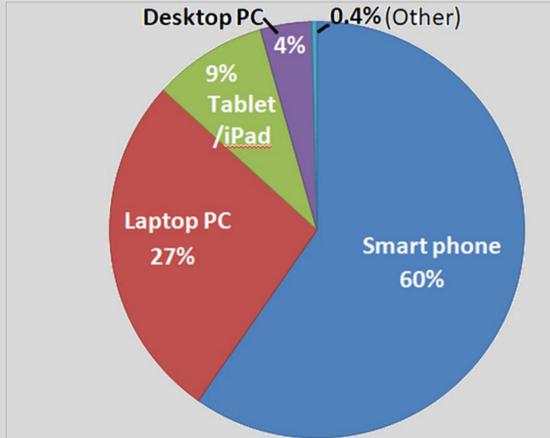
Method

Data was gathered for the period **01/01/20 - 06/02/24** for patients attending and clinicians conducting video consultations on the GGC community PNMHT AA platform. Questions focussed on topics such as technical issues, practicalities, advantages, disadvantages and overall experience. Users selected from pre-populated answers but could also enter comments/suggestions

Findings

- 923 patients + 418 clinicians** completed the surveys
- 97.6% of patients** reported that they would use video consulting again
- Patients rated the video consultations an average **✓ 9.1/10 for success**
- Patients rated the video consultations an average **✓ 9.3/10 for ease of use**
- 71% of patients + 87% of clinicians** preferred video to telephone consultation
- 98% of clinicians** reported they would use video consulting again
- Clinicians rated the video consultations an average **✓ 8.3/10 for success**
- 29% of clinicians** were able to observe the mother with her baby/children during the consultation

Devices used by patients to access their video consultation



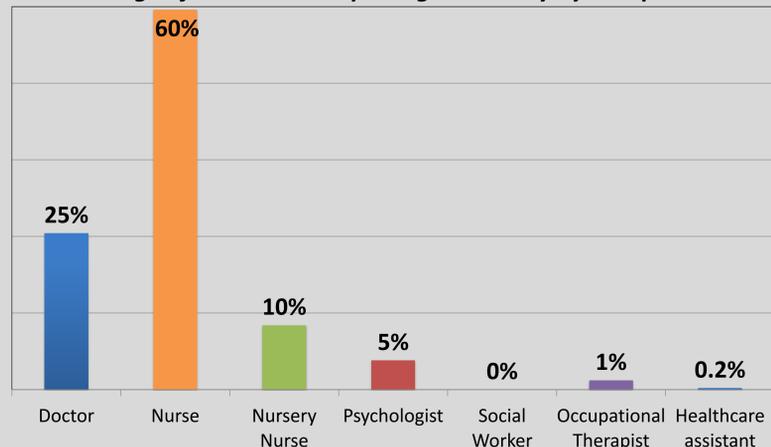
Top 3 patient reported benefits of video consulting

Benefit	%
Saved travelling	82%
More convenient	63%
Took less time	59%

3 main patient reported disadvantages of video consulting

Disadvantage	%
A face to face consultation would have been better for me	35%
I could not hear the other person properly	29%
I could not find somewhere private to make my call	18%

Percentage of clinicians completing the survey by occupation



Top 3 clinician reported benefits of video consulting

Benefit	%
Saved me having to travel	92%
Saved the service user/patient having to travel	88%
Took less time	36%

3 main clinician reported disadvantages of video consulting

Disadvantage	%
The video and audio quality impaired the consultation	62%
A face to face consultation would have been better	38%
Could not do everything via video, I need to re-arrange this appointment	6%

Conclusions

- The overwhelming consensus from patients was the impression of a great service, a positive experience and the patient being thankful for having had the opportunity to consult with a healthcare professional via the video consultation. Many patients noted feeling anxious but made to feel at ease by their clinician
- Video consulting continues to be a reliable, acceptable, sustainable method of communicating with patients
- Incorporating the results of these surveys could allow for further expansion of the service and increased acceptability of video consulting amongst patients and clinicians

Summary of patient comments and suggestions

difficult to get privacy
difficulty entertaining baby
would have liked an email link
didn't feel comforted
great service
requires knowledge of technology
difficulty knowing which text link for what appointment
helpful not having to arrange childcare
waste of paper
good way to see multiple hcp's at once
thank you
uses a lot of data
felt impersonal
nobody answered

ⁱ Welcome to NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde | Right Decisions (scot.nhs.uk), ⁱⁱ Can Near Me help you and your patients? Applying learning from high Near Me users in Primary Care – Realistic Medicine, ⁱⁱⁱ https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34516389/