

Supplementary Material

Clinician perspectives on rapid transition to telehealth during COVID-19 in Australia – a qualitative study

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Telehealth interview form

Thank you for taking the time to take part in this interview today. The interview will form part of a research project examining the clinician experience of the necessary move to telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications for your practice. We appreciate both your time and your insights. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

During the interview, we will be using a couple of terms we would like to define now, for the sake of clarity.

1) Telehealth: when we use the term "telehealth" we refer to the 'use of telecommunication techniques for the purpose of providing telemedicine, medical education, and health education over a distance'. For our purposes this also encompasses "telemedicine", which is defined as the 'use of advanced telecommunication technologies to exchange health information and provide health care services across geographic, time, social and cultural barriers'.

2) unless otherwise specified, please assume we are asking about both phone and video-conference teleconsults.

- ☐ Participant ID (researcher-assigned). _____
- ☐ Role and Level _____
- ☐ Location and type of practice _____
- ☐ Specialty _____

1. How long have you been practicing?
2. What proportion of your practice is spent on outpatient clinics per month?
3. Have you ever received any training in the use of phone or video for telehealth consults?
 - a. If yes, please provide details of training (phone, video, other platform, formal/informal)
4. Prior to COVID-19, how had you previously used telehealth in your clinical practice?

Optional prompts: Phone/ Video consultations, Australia-based/ International patients, urban/ rural & remote, Follow-up/ management consultations, new patient consults, full case: initial consult to discharge, other

5. What were the three main factors you considered when categorising your outpatients as suitable for face-to-face, delayed or telehealth consultation?
6. How well did this approach work for your clinical practice?
7. Has your approach to this categorizing process changed in response to your recent telehealth experience? If so, why?
8. When you were first adapting to the use of telemedicine, what were your expectations?

(optional prompts: what did you expect would be difficult/ easier? how did you anticipate these would be different to your normal workflow? how did you expect patients to respond?)

9. Would you say your experience has matched those expectations? Why/ why not?
10. What do you think are the essential elements of an effective telehealth consultation?
11. What types of consultation and clinical specialty do you think are best suited to telehealth?

optional prompts: what is it about these types of consults that lend itself to telehealth? Do you think it would work well for your specialty? Are there any kinds of consult you would never do via telehealth?

12. In a context where telehealth is required, does phone or video consult work better for your regular practice? Please briefly describe why.
13. Are there types of consults/ patients where this is not the case? Why/ why not?
14. Approximately how long are your telehealth consults? How does this compare to your regular consults, including administrative time?

We are also interested in the effects of telehealth on the doctor-patient relationship, such as aspects of the interaction related to body language, facial expression, demonstrating empathy, building rapport with patients and providing emotional support.

15. Reflecting on your telehealth experience, how did you find the relational aspects of the consultations?

Optional prompts/ things to look for: are teleconsults more tiring than regular consults? how have patients responded? is it easy to be a caring clinician via phone?

16. Reflecting on telehealth consultations you have completed in 2020, can you relate one instance of a successful use of telehealth? (Please don't include any identifying patient details)
17. Was this experience representative of your use of telehealth approaches? why/ why not?
18. Can you please describe a specific experience where telehealth use has been a problem? (Please don't include any identifying patient details)
19. What are the risks you see as being associated with using telehealth in your practice? Please note that when we say "risk" we mean inherent exposures, not challenges or difficulties that can be overcome.

Prompt, if respondent has difficulty: In this item we are interested in your perspective on legal, ethical, practical, clinical and privacy-related risks that are part-and-parcel of conducting your consults via phone or video.

Optional further prompts: are there ways these risks can be mitigated? In what circumstances is it worth the risk?

20. Thinking ahead to your future practice and assuming the risk of COVID19 is eliminated, will you include telehealth in your regular practice? Why/ why not?
21. Finally, are there any other comments you'd like to make about your experiences with or perceptions of telehealth?