

Mental health appointments: are phone or video consultations as effective as face-to-face?

The use of technology has suddenly become much more important due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Evidence of how these changes affect service users and health professionals is still being collected. This document summarises key themes from a review of research conducted into remote consultations before Covid-19.

Research in this area is ongoing. Service users and mental health services in south London are collaborating on a project to understand the impact of remote consultations. We would like you to be involved:

<https://bit.ly/MH-Remote-Consultations>



Technical challenges

Some technical issues (eg connection problems) have been experienced, but overall these do not seem to have a significant negative impact on services or users.



Patient outcomes

Both video and telephone consultations were found to result in significant reductions in symptom severity, with outcomes comparable to face-to-face. These results were consistent for service users experiencing many different conditions.

Therapeutic relationships

Most service users felt that remote appointments were about as good for building relationships with therapists, although medical professionals had more reservations.



Convenience & costs

Many service users find remote consultations convenient, saving money and time (especially in rural areas) and helping more service users attend consultations. Set-up costs can be high.

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
South London



NHS
Oxleas
NHS Foundation Trust

Mental Health
Policy Research Unit
mhpru

NHS
South London
and Maudsley
NHS Foundation Trust

NHS
South West London and
St George's Mental Health
NHS Trust

 KING'S HEALTH PARTNERS

An Academic Health Sciences Centre for London