

Project Title

Do Video Consultations Pale in Comparison to In-Person Consultations in the Eyes of Physicians?: A Qualitative Study.

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Dr Lee Eng Sing

Project members: Ms Ong Sin Kee, Dr Sabrina Lee Poay Sian, Ms Koh Hui Li, Dr Evelyn Chew Ai Ling, Dr Tan Shu Yun, A/Prof Ding Yew Yoong

Organisation(s) Involved

1. Clinical Research Unit, National Healthcare Group Polyclinics, Singapore
2. Geriatric Education and Research Institute, Singapore
3. Department of Geriatric Medicine, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore
4. Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Healthcare Family Group Involved in this Project

Medical, Allied Health

Specialty or Discipline (if applicable)

Family Medicine, Geriatric Medicine

Project Period

Start date: 18 June 2020

Completed date: 17 June 2021

Aims

To explore the perspectives of physicians regarding the adoption and sustainability of video consultations for older adults with multimorbidity

Background

See poster appended / below

Methods

See poster appended / below

Results

See poster appended / below

Lessons Learnt

We are grateful to the participants for being forthcoming in the sharing of their experiences, which allowed us to have ample depth to develop our analysis and results. The project was part of a larger study, which explored the perspectives of different stakeholders involved in the adoption, implementation, and scale-up of the video consultation model in the healthcare setting in Singapore. This is one of the main features of the project as it examined the intricacies of the multidisciplinary insights, and weaved them together to provide a more comprehensive outlook of the feasibility and sustainability of the new care model. The current project was a qualitative study, and we would like to invite others who are interested in the subject topic to consider the potential of a mixed-study design to add on to the field of knowledge. We hope our project contributes to the collective knowledge, and look forward to further opportunities for collaboration.

Conclusion

See poster appended / below

Additional Information

Singapore Health & Biomedical Congress (SHBC) 2021 – Attained the Merit Award in the Category of the Singapore Primary Care Research Award (Oral)

Project Category

Technology, Digital Health, Telehealth, Applied Research, Qualitative Research, Care Continuum, Primary Care

Keywords

COVID-19, Safe Distancing, Video Consultation, Older Adults, Multimorbidity, Evaluation Research, Inductive Thematic Analysis

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

Name: Dr Lee Eng Sing

Email: eng_sing_lee@nhgp.com.sg

Do Video Consultations Pale in Comparison to In-Person Consultations in the Eyes of Physicians?: A Qualitative Study.

Sin Kee Ong¹, Hui Li Koh¹, Poay Sian Sabrina Lee¹, Evelyn Ai Ling Chew¹, Shu Yun Tan¹, Yew Yoong Ding^{2,3}, Eng Sing Lee^{1,4}

¹Clinical Research Unit, National Healthcare Group Polyclinics, Singapore ²Geriatric Education and Research Institute, Singapore

³Department of Geriatric Medicine, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore

⁴Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

BACKGROUND



COVID-19 pandemic

- the enforcement of social distancing
- prospects for video consultations (VCs) in the primary care setting in Singapore

OBJECTIVES

To explore the perspectives of physicians regarding the adoption and sustainability of VCs for older adults with multimorbidity



METHODS

Individual in-depth interviews

- 15 family physicians purposively selected and interviewed over Zoom between July and December 2020
- non-adoption, abandonment, scale-up, spread, and sustainability (NASSS) framework was used to develop the interview guide

Inductive thematic analysis

- Three investigators conducted inductive thematic analysis independently until consensus was reached

RESULTS

Three Themes Emerged...

Perceived value of VCs for physicians and patients

- ✓ novel insights gathered from patients' home environment,
- ✓ flexibility and accessibility extended to patients
- ✗ restricted scope for patient examination,
- ✗ increased responsibilities
- ✗ fewer available communication cues

Physicians' receptivity towards VCs

- Most physicians were optimistic about the adoption and sustainability of VCs
- Despite its constraints, the future relevance of VCs was acknowledged



Characteristics of an optimal VC

- adequate digital and health literacy
- good rapport and shared goals between physicians and patients
- smooth workflow



CONCLUSIONS



Video consultations do not pale in comparison to in-person consultations.

- VCs have additional value proposition despite certain limitations and safety concerns.
- Physicians expressed confidentiality, liabilities and safety concerns, but the future relevance of VCs was acknowledged.
- Addressing these issues may encourage physicians to adopt VCs with greater ease of mind.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank Gayathri Muthulingam for her tireless efforts in conducting the interviews for this study. This research was supported by the Geriatric Education & Research Institute COVID-19 Grant (reference: CG004/REPCGE005) and National Medical Research Council's Centre Grant Programme (NMRC/CG/C019/2017).