



## Parents' perception regarding paediatrics outpatients' phone clinics

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The COVID-19 pandemic has led to major changes to healthcare and its delivery to patients. Phone clinics were introduced on an urgent basis to help already stressed outpatient services. Advantages of the virtual clinics (v.c) include saving of time, money and efforts [1]. Parents do not need to drive to the hospital, take a day off work, day off school for the child and pay for car parking. In addition, virtual clinics reduce carbon emission. The aim of this survey is to assess parent's opinion and gather their feedback about virtual paediatrics phone clinics in Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar. We conducted this questionnaire-based survey where participants were parents of children who attended our paediatrics virtual OPD clinics. At the end of phone consultation, we obtained and documented informed consents. A text message with a link to a seven questions (Google doc) questionnaire was sent. Data was analysed thereafter using Google doc and Excel. Sixty-five out of one hundred twenty-one parents responded and filled the questionnaire (53.7%). We attributed this relatively low response rate to the scare generated by the recent cyberattack on the Health Service Executive website. Fifty-six percent participants reported their experience as excellent (34/65) while 40% (26/65) rated it as satisfactory. Overall 95% of parents (60/65) were happy about the v.c experience. Eighty-six percent felt that they were clearly understood (53/61) while 87% were happy regarding the consultation time (55/63). Fifty-one of sixty parents (85%) had their concerns addressed. Follow-up plan was clear to 97% of parents (61/63) while only 5% were not

happy about the overall management plans. The satisfaction rate was more than 85% for all questions including consultation time, addressing concerns, clarity of management and follow-up plan and overall satisfaction of the process. It was clear that the majority of participants were happy about the phone consultation clinics in general. Our survey results were in line with previously published reports [2]. Despite the overall good rating, we think that with more time allocation, the satisfaction rate would improve. With good selection of cases, phone clinic seems to provide reasonable cost-effective alternative to ordinary clinics.

### References

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