

# 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 & cost-effectiveness

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.