

Sharing of Teleconsultation Experience with Spinal Cord Injury Patients

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51200/bjms.vi.3752>

Keywords: teleconsultation (TC),
virtual clinic (VC), spinal cord injury

Background and aim: Teleconsultation (TC) is a new medical service provided remotely via communication technology. In Klinik Pakar Spinal (KPS), Hospital Rehabilitasi Cheras (HRC), TC is offered to follow up patients who are supposed to come for physical clinic consultation since January 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and movement control order (MCO). Those interested will be scheduled for either virtual clinic (VC) sessions via Google Meet or telephone consultation.

Methods: TC was planned since 2020 with two workshops conducted in HRC to decide on the policy and workflow for the TC service. In January 2021, the first VC was done in KPS, and patients were selected among stable, follow-up cases. The patient must have a valid email address and own a device with a suitable VC platform. The setting up of the VC in KPS is done in a room equipped with a webcam, speakers, and a stable intranet. Patients will be scheduled for their VC sessions via Google Meet the day before, and an invitation will be sent via email, while telephone consultations will be arranged accordingly and conducted on the scheduled day and time. After teleconsultation, the clinical input will be documented in the patient's case note. In KPS, 18.24% of spinal cord injury patients were agreeable for TC. **Results:** The benefits of TC include patients not having to travel and being followed up safely at their homes. It also reduces the crowding of patients in the clinic. Therefore, reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. TC is also useful for those patients

who have the anxiety to attend appointments physically due to the pandemic. However, TC's limitations include lack of human touch and inability to perform the physical examination on patients, communication difficulties, and

IT failure. **Conclusion:** Teleconsultation is a beneficial service that needs further exploring and promoting access to rehabilitation care for many people throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.