

Exploring Advantages & Limitations of Video Consultations ~ Lessons Learnt so far ~

Rina Van der Walt
Consultant Speech & Language Therapist
Cerebral Palsy Cymru

Cerebral Palsy
Scotland Conference
1 October 2020



Terminology



'Video Consultations' refer to remote/online assessment and management.

More commonly used terms are: 'Telehealth/ tele-practice/ telemedicine/ teletherapy' and is defined by WHO (2016) as the...

"delivery of health care services, where patients and providers are separated by distance... (it) can contribute to achieving universal health coverage by improving access for patients to quality, cost-effective, health services wherever they may be"



Professional Organisation Guidance



To ensure continuity of support for service users during Covid-19 restrictions, the HCPC and professional organisations have made guidance available, including **the remote provision of healthcare services using technology.**



Guidance example

Maintain Standards	Key sections of the standards for telehealth services are available on the HCPC & professional organization websites
Promote and safeguard	Promote and safeguard the interests of service users
Privacy	Respect confidentiality
Risks	Manage risk to families AND professionals
Communication	Communicate appropriately and effectively
Delegate	Carefully delegate responsibility
Accountability	Adhere to Professional Autonomy and Accountability



Keeping proper records and ensuring patient/client **confidentiality**.



NOTE: For most services, assessments and treatment based solely on questionnaires or standardised non-personal input does not constitute enough care.



Taking a proper history from new patients/clients remains important if face-to-face contact is minimised.



Inherent limitations include not being able to obtain a full clinical picture from a remote viewpoint which could lead to incorrect recommendations, symptoms being missed and possibly an incorrect diagnosis.



There are important **ethical and legal considerations**.



Currently available research and subjective evidence indicate that it is **NOT** suitable for every case!

Telehealth Advantages

No travel required

Familiar environment for child/client

Realistic expectations and suggestions based on family environment

Family 'doing' all handling (immediate carry-over) and using own equipment/ furniture/ in the home

Others in home hearing and seeing all that is suggested and done first-hand

Teamwork easier - members can join sessions as they are able to fit it in amongst other tasks

Important Considerations



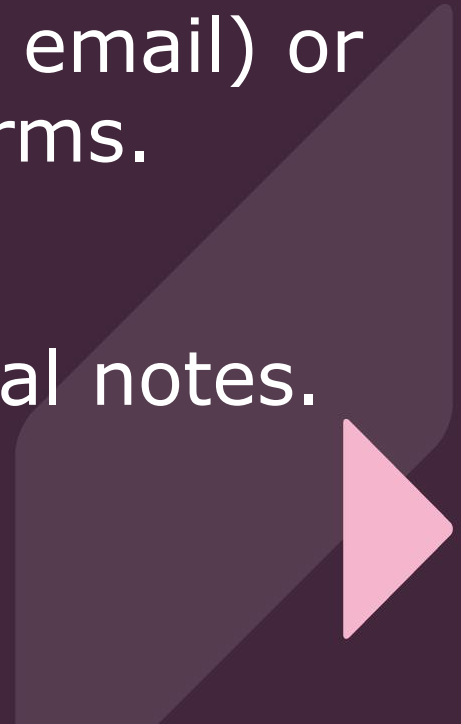
- Consider the family's rights and responsibilities, including their right to decline this mode of service delivery.
- Be aware of aspects related to security online.
- There is growing evidence in support of telehealth but also agreement that it is not suitable for everyone.
- Plan alternative service provision options, should the service user decline; doesn't have access to technology; or it is evident that telehealth will not work for a specific client.



Prior to video consultation



- Send consent forms tailored specifically to telehealth!
- Informed consent to telehealth can be given in verbal or written form (e.g. via email) or electronic signatures on digital forms.
- Document verbal consent in clinical notes.





Send information regarding the video consultation session well ahead of time so that parents/clients can prepare!



Example Guidelines for a video consultation

- Download Zoom/Skype/..etc. onto your tablet, phone or computer. In our experience, a tablet or laptop works better than a phone, but it isn't essential.
- 2 adults are preferable– one to be with your child and another adult to be 'camera person'. Mount the device on a hands-free unit if you are on your own.
- It is best if your child is in appropriate clothing; depending on age – a nappy and vest; shorts or tight leggings and vest. This allows us to observe your child's movements better.
- Have a clear space on the floor available.
- Have some of your child's favourite toys or activities available.
- We welcome siblings, however if you feel it might be disruptive, please try to keep them otherwise occupied, so we can spend as much time focussed on your child as possible.
- Keep background noise to a minimum.

TECHNOLOGY



- Choose the best telehealth technologies and platform for your practice - ensure it enables you to provide uninterrupted care, treatment and services.
- The requirements will vary depending on individual circumstances and the type of service provided.
- When using video consultation - need a webcam and a microphone; speakers (or headphones); and stable internet connection (4G sometimes more stable than wi-fi).

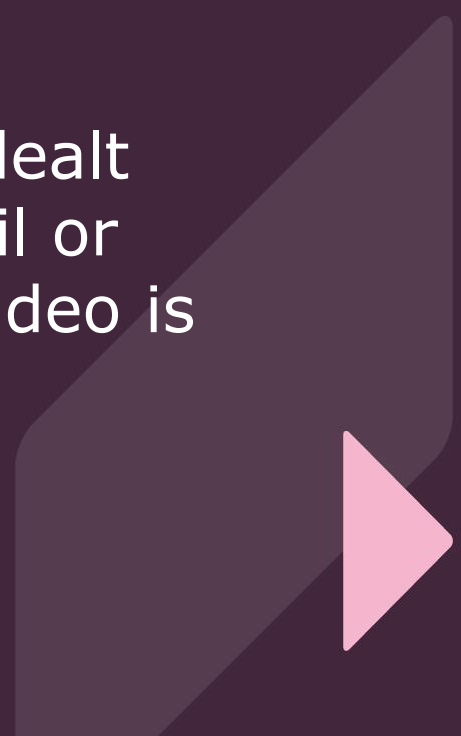


Technology



Ensure that the technology you are using is **secure** and that there is no exchange of **personal identifiable data (PID)** over the video call.

Ensure PID is **also** dealt with via secure email or phone **before** the video is commenced.



Preparing for a Video consultation....

- Set up own technology, work space, materials that you will need during the session (toys, tools, doll for demo, etc!)
- Assist parents in setting up technology and more.
- May have to send certain items beforehand.
- Plan remote assessments:
 - E.g. digital versions of paper assessment; scanned pictures; questionnaires, etc
 - Use of visualiser (non-digital is displayed digitally); mounted device, etc



Example of Visualisers

Mounting phone for close-up view of items



Preparing for a video consultation...



- Ensure privacy at your & clients' location.
- Be informed and aware of everyone present for the virtual visit.
- Use passwords and virtual waiting rooms – control access!
- Disable function that allows others to record the session without permission.



Preparing for a video consultation...



- Turn off all apps and notifications on your computer or smartphone. Ask parent/client to do the same.
- Conduct the session mostly like you would an in-person session.
- Be relaxed, flexible & have a sense of humour!
- Do not talk to a child through the parent more than is necessary, address the child directly.



DURING THE SESSION

- Extent of addressing the child directly will vary depending on: Age, Level of understanding and cognition, Attention level, Severity and type of child's difficulty, Motivation.
- Consider what parents/client can see (screen size) & adapt accordingly!
- When team present-talk one at a time & say ONLY the necessary. Team members MUTE when not speaking!

DURING THE SESSION



- Engage child while guiding the parent e.g. sing a song to support parent in getting child's cooperation or to distract them; show something on screen to help with attention and motivation.
- Advise parents in terms of toys and how to play to support the child's behaviour or actions.
- Provide constructive feedback to parent throughout – this is NOT easy for parents!



Online demo-positioning options



Online Demo Placement of toys



'Screen Sharing'

e.g. relevant communication pictures





Online demo - supporting child on floor, having hands free to assist with activity



Challenges for Families/Clients



The parent/carer is required to play a more significant role!

This can be daunting for them!

Convey trust in the parent's ability to do unfamiliar things!



Challenges for Families/Clients



Families are obliged to 'let us into their homes'.

Burden on parents/caregivers to execute all of the actions!

Stressful for parents to have several people on screen watching them 'do the work'!



Challenges for professionals



We depend to a large extent on what we ‘feel with our hands’ when working with a child/adult with neuro-disability – e.g. the quality of muscle tone; joint range of motion; resistance to movement.

Our practice environments are set up to elicit the behaviours we want to assess/observe to guide our intervention and advice to clients/their families.

Excellent communication skills are required when directing someone else to ‘be your hands’!



Challenges for professionals



Video Consultations require more experienced staff – could pose a challenge for services!

Clinicians depend on their experience & knowledge to judge what they are seeing & hearing in the absence of being able to 'feel' what is occurring; and manipulate the environment.

Experience with a variety of clinical presentations makes it easier to predict and anticipate in order to guide the parent/client who is physically present with the child/adult with a disability.



The
expert in
anything
was
once a
beginner.



Be relaxed, be
flexible and have
FUN!!





THANK YOU



Because
we know.
We are needed
now more than ever.

