

Patient and professional experience of virtual antenatal clinics during the COVID-19 pandemic in a UK tertiary obstetric hospital: a questionnaire study

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Abstract

Objective We evaluated patient and professional's experience with virtual antenatal clinic appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic, to determine satisfaction and enquire into the safety and quality of care received. **Design, Setting, Population and Methods** A total of 148 women who attended a virtual antenatal clinic appointment at our UK tertiary obstetric care centre over a two-week period provided feedback (62% response rate). A further 37 health care professionals (HCP) delivering care in the virtual antenatal clinics participated in another questionnaire study (82% response rate). **Main Outcome Measures and Results** We showed that women were highly satisfied with the virtual clinics, with 86% rating their experience as good/very good, and this was not associated with any statistically significant differences in age, ethnicity, number of previous births or pregnancy loss(es) ($p>0.05$). Even though, 56% preferred face-to-face appointments, 44% either expressed no preference or preferred virtual, and these preferences were not associated with significant differences in patient demographics ($p>0.05$). For HCP, 67% rated their experience of virtual clinics as good/very good; 78% described their experience as the same or better than face-to-face clinics; 15% preferred virtual clinics and 44% had no preference. Importantly, 67% found it easy/very easy to adapt to virtual clinics. Over 90% of HCP agreed virtual clinics should be implemented long-term. **Conclusions** Our study demonstrates high satisfaction with telephone, antenatal clinics during the pandemic, which supports the transition towards widespread digitalisation of antenatal care, suited to twenty first century patients and professionals. **Funding** None **Keywords** COVID-19, Virtual clinic, antenatal, satisfaction

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