

# Has Telemedicine come to Fruition? Parents' and Physicians' Perceptions and Preferences Regarding Telemedicine

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## Introduction

The aim of our study was **to evaluate both patient and physician perceptions, preferences, and acceptability** regarding the use of the different modalities of **telemedicine** for various health problems.

## Methods

We conducted a **cross-sectional survey** in Geneva in 2021. Parents and physicians completed an online questionnaire focused on **digital literacy, acceptability, preferences, as well as barriers and facilitators** concerning a variety of telemedicine modalities for different health concerns.

## Results

- **222 parents and 45 pediatricians** participated (78% women, 42% physicians working in private practice and 58% physicians employed by public institutions).
- **Parents preferred the telephone** for simple medical advice (64%), discussion of parameters (64%), acute or chronic problems (64% and 57%), and psychological support (62%).
- They valued **emails** for communication of blood tests (62%) and renewal of medication (57%).
- **Pediatricians** considered the phone and e-mail to be an acceptable modality for all the issues mentioned above.
- **Video** was considered acceptable for follow-up of patients with both acute and chronic diseases (30%).
- Parents' main reasons for using telemedicine were **avoiding travel** (67%) and **saving time** (59%).
- **Disadvantages** were lack of physical examination (68%), technical problems (38%), and unsuitability (44%).
- Physicians feared the **potential negative impact of telemedicine on the therapeutic relationship** and insisted on the need for a facilitated access and a user-friendly format of online platforms.



## Conclusion

The use of telemedicine has increased since the pandemic but **both doctors and parents continue to prefer face-to-face consultations**. Telephone remains more acceptable than video in most medical situations.