

**LETTER TO EDITOR****Teledentistry in the Recovery Phase of Covid-19: Is it a Reasonable Option for Developing Countries?****Fatima Tehreem<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Rehab Khan<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Asharib Arshad<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Department of Dentistry, FMH College of Medicine and Dentistry, <sup>2</sup>Department of Surgery, FMH College of Medicine and Dentistry, Lahore, Pakistan.  
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Dear Editor,

Telehealth as described by the World Health Organization (WHO) is delivering healthcare to a patient by a doctor using media devices when both are far away from each other. Telemedicine has been discussed as a modality to provide better access to health from the early 1990s<sup>1</sup>. The recent outbreak of Covid-19 has made this modality a good alternative keeping in mind the comfort and safety of the patient. It has also made it a much more common practice.

Recent research has supported the notion that both the service providers and users are highly satisfied by this modality. Teledentistry does not contribute to the progress of disease and is much more cost-effective<sup>2</sup>. According to a study by Greenhalgh et al., that online video consultation was better suited to people with chronic ailments but surprisingly they played a pivotal role in managing acute conditions also in this Covid-19 pandemic<sup>3</sup>. Teledentistry has become an integral part of the healthcare system of developed countries such as Australia and the United States<sup>4</sup>.

Teledentistry is a blessing for patients who are COVID positive and need some consultation. It is also fruitful for immunocompromised patients as it saves them from the exposure of the hospital. Also, almost all the dental procedures require close contact on the patient and the dentist so it ensures the safety of both individuals. Patient counseling can be done effectively and all non-invasive procedures can be instructed to the patient. It can also save patient from unnecessary follow up visits. The exchange of written, recorded voice messages and video conversations for the doubts of the patient about the diagnosis and management can also improve the quality of healthcare<sup>5</sup>.

There are some hindrances with teledentistry such as technical issues leading to poor visibility and image quality, which results in wrong diagnosis. Basic dental investigations such as periapical X-ray cannot be done at home. Teledentistry allows the patient to choose to have online consultation over the old-fashioned face-to-face visit. Thus, by utilizing this modern approach we can limit the patient contact in the recovery phase of Covid-19 during this outbreak. This can also help to clear the backlog of patient whose appointments were cancelled due to the Covid-19 outbreak and it can help to give priority to those patients who are suffering from acute issues that require immediate treatment. This will help to bring the dental health services to its normal routine more quickly and efficiently.

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**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION**

All authors contributed equally in the write-up.

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