

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

[Translated article] Soft skills in orthopaedic and trauma telematic consultations during the COVID-19 pandemic



Las habilidades blandas en las consultas telemáticas de ortopedia y traumatología durante la pandemia COVID-19

Dear Editor,

The research study entitled «Resultado de la implantación de consultas telemáticas en cirugía ortopédica y traumatología durante la pandemia COVID-19» (Results of the implementation of telematic consultations in orthopaedic surgery and traumatology during the COVID-19 pandemic)¹ reveals the increase in remote orthopaedic and traumatology consultations, especially in the population with physical disabilities that limit their travelling to hospital. The health emergency resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic affected patient care, forcing the health sector to seek new care alternatives. Telemedicine is the alternative through which a disease can be diagnosed without the need for direct physical contact between the patient and the healthcare professional. However, for this type of care to be effective, a warm relationship must be established with the patient making the teleconsultation. Hence the importance of using soft skills such as communication and active listening.² We understand communication and active listening as the capacity for dialogue between two people, where the person delivering the message must ensure that the receiver (the patient) has correctly understood it. If communication meets these requirements, the doctor will diagnose the patient correctly and check through feedback that their recommendations have been understood.³ Highlighting communication and active listening during the telemedicine consultation will ensure excellent care from the healthcare professional. This also means a change in the use of technological tools and in the management of ICT, which have become an alternative that supports this type of service

in the population, as the myth that care must necessarily be face-to-face has been dispelled. The specialist can also establish a bond with the patient to gain the information they need to make an appropriate diagnosis. It is essential, therefore, that orthopaedics and traumatology professionals use soft skills such as communication and active listening in telematic consultations, a service option that arose during the SARS-CoV-2 health emergency. The population need to be provided rapid, effective, and humanistic primary care, especially those with limited ability to travel to a health centre. Medical services are changing, and the specialty of orthopaedics and traumatology is no exception.

Level of evidence

Level of evidence II.

Funding

No funding was received for this work.

References

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DOI of original article: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.recot.2021.03.003>

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.recot.2021.03.015>

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