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Webinar

Is teleconsultation the future of plastics surgery? A single-center experience of virtual consultations during COVID-19 and patient outcomes

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Aim:

With enforcement of social distancing measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face patient contact was shifted to telemedicine consultations. There is limited evidence evaluating patient experience of follow-ups and expectations into quality metrics. Our aim was to perform a service evaluation by prospectively evaluating the management and outcomes of plastic surgery patients.

Methods:

Patients were consecutively assessed over the COVID-19 lockdown period, from March to May 2020. They ranged from urgent cancer cases to burns and trauma. We used a questionnaire to evaluate initial treatment, wound care, complications and overall service. A validated health-related quality of life (HRQL) survey was used to assess the impact of injury or wound on lifestyle, and we also assessed patient enablement. Correlation analysis determined relationships between outcomes, service evaluations and HRQL variables.

Results:

77 patients were consecutively treated in our unit, of which 46 completed the questionnaire. 42.2% used multimedia as mode of follow-up, including smart phones for messages and videocalls, and trust e-mails. There was a 3-fold increase in number of infections for non-face-to-face consultations, with a correlation significance of 0.043. We found no correlation between age and wound complication rates. 72.7% of patients found overall service very good or excellent. Although overall service satisfaction was similar for multimedia use and face-to-face consultations ($p=0.02$), less patients were confident looking after their wound without face-to-face follow-ups.

Conclusion:

COVID-19 has brought upon an unprecedented change in practice in our department. Implementing multimedia use and educating patients on wound care can significantly improve efficiency and service provision.

Recent Publications (minimum 5)

18F-FDG PET in the Diagnosis of Vascular Prosthetic Graft Infection: A Diagnostic Test Accuracy Meta-Analysis.

Rojoa D, Kontopodis N, Antoniou SA, Ioannou CV, Antoniou GA. *Eur J Vasc Endovasc Surg.* 2019 Feb;57(2):292-301. doi: 10.1016/j.ejvs.2018.08.040. Epub 2018 Sep 18. PMID: 30241981

Ultrasonography for the diagnosis of extra-cranial carotid occlusion - diagnostic test accuracy meta-analysis.

Rojoa DM, Lodhi AQD, Kontopodis N, Ioannou CV, Labropoulos N, Antoniou GA. *Vasa.* 2020 Apr;49(3):195-204. doi: 10.1024/0301-1526/a000850. Epub 2020 Jan 27. PMID: 31983286

Merkel-cell carcinoma of the upper limb.

M Rojoa D, Katsogridakis E, Madan M, Rao M. *J Surg Case Rep.* 2018 Aug 14;2018(8):rjy190. doi: 10.1093/jscr/rjy190. eCollection 2018 Aug. PMID: 30151102

Delays in surgery for cholesteatoma due to COVID-19: is there an impact on rates of recidivism and major complications?

Hussain MH, Mair M, Mahmood S, Sakagiannis G, Rojoa DM, Raheman FJ, Irvine E, Rea P. *Eur Arch Otorhinolaryngol.* 2020 Oct 10:1-7. doi: 10.1007/s00405-020-06416-7. Online ahead of print. PMID: 33040233

The role of ultrasonography in the assessment of ulnar collateral ligament injury of the thumb - a diagnostic test accuracy meta-analysis

Raheman FJ, Rojoa DM, Dhingra M, Siddiqui S, Macdonald CR. *J Plast Surg Hand Surg.* 2020 Nov 6:1-13. doi: 10.1080/2000656X.2020.1838295. Online ahead of print. PMID: 33156740

Biography (150-word limit)

Djamila Rojoa is a core surgical trainee with an interest in plastics surgery. She has performed multiple reviews and original researches and has a passion for academic medicine. She is a graduate of the University of Manchester, and is currently working in Leicester.

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