P066  TELEPHONE CLINICS: WHAT ARE OUR PATIENTS SAYING?
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Background/Aims
Telemedicine has not previously been a regular part of routine rheumatology services. Our department adopted telephone clinics during the COVID-19 pandemic. We assessed patient satisfaction by conducting a feedback survey. Our aim was to obtain a patient perspective on remote consultations and on preferred future follow up options including video or face-to-face consultations.

Methods
The cohort included 160 rheumatology patients who had a telephone consultation between May and mid-June 2020. All patients consented to receive a further phone call by a different member of the team. Patients had to answer a questionnaire about recent consultation and to rate this on a scale of 1-5. Other questions included whether all their queries were answered; clear action plan made; perceived benefits or disadvantages of telephone consultation; and views about future follow up and any additional comments.

Results
71.9% of 160 patients were females while 28.1% males. Mean age 58.6 yrs. More than half of the patients (60.6%) had a diagnosis of inflammatory arthritis, followed by connective tissue disease (19.3%), other diagnosis (8.1%) & vasculitis (5.6%). 94.4 % of the patients in this study were return appointments-the remainder new. Feedback results revealed 92.5% patients were satisfied with their consultation with mean score of 4.3/5 (5 = best, 1 = worst). More than 80% agreed that all their queries were answered and a clear action plan was formed during consultation. However, 71.2% would want a face to face consultation if given choice while 54 % happy to have further follow up over the phone. 65% of patients preferred not to have video consultation. Subgroup analysis showed that majority of patients who would accept video consultation were aged between 30-39. Most common benefits described were noted to be convenience; reduced time of work; travel time and safety during pandemic, whilst difficulty in describing symptoms; hearing problems; and severity of disease were disadvantages raised, but numbers were small in our cohort.

Conclusion
Telephone clinics were the mainstay during the COVID-19 pandemic. The large majority of the rheumatology patients in our cohort were highly satisfied with this form of consultation. However, interestingly the majority (71%) would still prefer face-to-face consultation as follow up in the future. Regular follow up in carefully selected patient groups can successfully be performed by telephone clinics with good patient satisfaction. This would help increase capacity within the clinic setting.

Disclosure
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