

[EDITORIAL]**Telerehabilitation and Covid-19: An Emerging Approach for Health Care System in India****Dr. Deepak Anap (PT)¹, Dr. Priyanka Jadhav (PT)²**¹Professor & HOD, ²Assistant Professor, Department of Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy, D.V.V.P.F.'s, College of Physiotherapy, Ahmednagar.

Telerehabilitation is termed as habilitation or rehabilitation services that are provided by a rehabilitation professional remotely, which is useful for assessment, monitoring, prevention, intervention, supervision, education, consultation, and counseling. It comprises the use of videoconferencing via the internet, phone calls, and virtual reality systems, where remote interaction with patients can either be real-time or prerecorded.⁽¹⁾ It is cost saving, easy accessibility and gives a quality health services.⁽²⁾ In modern India, technology is connecting people over different areas. This also helps in health sector to get connected with their health facility by being at home.

With increasing cases worldwide, World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 as pandemic on March 2020. Because of the worldwide lockdown managing patients from inpatient and outpatient department was a big challenge.⁽³⁾ Considering the global burden of disease, effectiveness of Tele-rehabilitation has been established in many developed countries but it is still emerging in many developing countries.

Telerehabilitation allows continuity of care for patients who can benefit from remote consultations, while ensuring greater protection for those who are members of vulnerable group.⁽⁴⁾

Many researches showed the benefits of Telerehabilitation in various conditions including orthopedic (eg, low back, total joint arthroplasty), neurological (eg, stroke, multiple sclerosis), and wide spread chronic pain syndromes (eg, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis).⁽⁵⁾

Patients were satisfied with telerehabilitation services and the also encouraged for more such sessions for their health benefits. Telerehabilitation reduces the waiting list in OPD, improves the accessibility to good health care and also cost effective treatment option. Most of the patients preferred video calling through Whatsapp as they

are familiar with it and easy to use. This improves confidence among them and acceptance of telehealth gets promoted. Telerehabilitation is also beneficial for PT practice during covid- 19 and beyond. Many therapists found it effective as their communication skills gets enhanced through video calling consultation also it reduces the patient waiting list. Through a live exercise session, therapist constant monitoring helps the patient to improve their condition. Some of the therapist found limited because of use of modalities.⁽⁶⁾

Telerehabilitation is still under evolution and need to be explored with its advance technology for health care. Available evidences showed that it could be comparable or better option than conventional therapy in chronic pain management.⁽⁷⁾ Also there should be increase awareness among population with standardized protocol of telerehabilitation for better result.

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