



Patient satisfaction in the use of tele-hepatology in patients with viral liver cirrhosis

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The use of telemedicine in advanced liver diseases is still a challenge. The objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of telemedicine in preventing decompensation of liver cirrhosis and to assess patient satisfaction with this strategy.

METHODS

Patients with delta viral liver cirrhosis were surveyed regarding satisfaction with tele-hepatology. Clinical, demographic, and social determinants of health data were collected to identify factors associated with satisfaction. The study period was between 2023–2025. Email, WhatsApp or telephone were used as interaction tools, depending on patient preferences. Consultations were considered resolved via teleconsultation when an adequate diagnosis and follow-up were obtained, without the need to refer the patient to the hospital. Patient satisfaction with telemedicine was assessed using the Telemedicine Satisfaction Questionnaire.

RESULTS

Of 140 patients approached, 98 agreed to use teleconsultation. 62.2% suffered from decompensated liver cirrhosis. The most common conditions resolved by telemedicine were ascites (44.9%) and moni-

toring of antiviral therapy (48.9%), but also the resolution of other conditions apparently unrelated to liver disease (epigastric pain, loss of appetite, lower limb cramps) – 30.6%. 75% of patients rated their experience as "good" or "excellent". Satisfied patients were younger ($p < 0.05$). Women were more satisfied than men ($p = 0.05$). Lack of internet remained independently associated with lower satisfaction ($p = 0.03$).

CONCLUSIONS

Our results show the effectiveness of telehepatology in severe liver diseases, especially for monitoring and surveillance of patients with liver cirrhosis. A high degree of satisfaction among patients with liver disease was identified when teleconsultation was used.