



Singapore Healthcare Management 2021

Video-Consultation



in SingHealth Polyclinics



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Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SingHealth Polyclinics (SHP) faced challenges in ensuring adequate provision of care while maintaining safe distancing for our patients.

In order to address these challenges, the Remote Care Workgroup leveraged on technology and used the video-conferencing tool Zoom to launch a doctor led video-consultation service for our chronic patients with diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidaemia – **ViCON@SHP**. This allowed us to continue to provide patient care outside physical clinic visits.

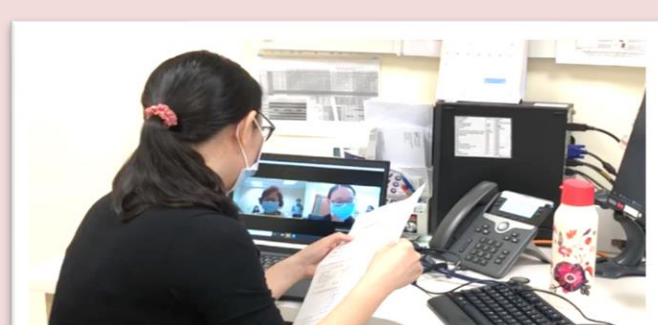
Aim

1. Enable patients with chronic diseases to consult a doctor from home via a video conferencing tool
2. Ensure an acceptable or better level of quality and safety while using video consultation for chronic diseases
3. Reduce the number of patients who do not come to clinic due to poor mobility, fear of COVID-19 and social reasons

Method

Staff from various departments with domain knowledge of the care and operational processes were gathered to form the project team. They formulated the initial workflow to provide remote access to primary care via video consultation (VC) and home delivery of medication. Zoom was selected as the primary video conferencing tool. This was also approved for use by iHIS.

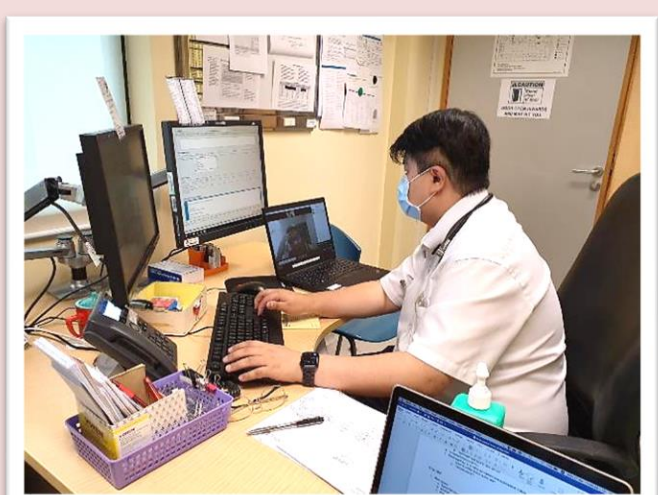
Testing of feasibility (April-May 2020)



Punggol polyclinic

Onsite consult testing at the polyclinics

- Patients physically in the clinic were recruited for onsite video consultation (VC)
- The doctor and patient were placed in different rooms and consultation was held over Zoom



Pasir Ris polyclinic

Remote consult testing

- Regular Family Physician Clinic patients were recruited to further trial the process of VC
- Using Zoom, consults were held with patients who were physically at home

Adding on Teledispensing of medications

- Carried out by pharmacists before medications are delivered
- Pharmacists dispensed medications with the patient (and caregiver) at home

Training for all polyclinics (June 2020)

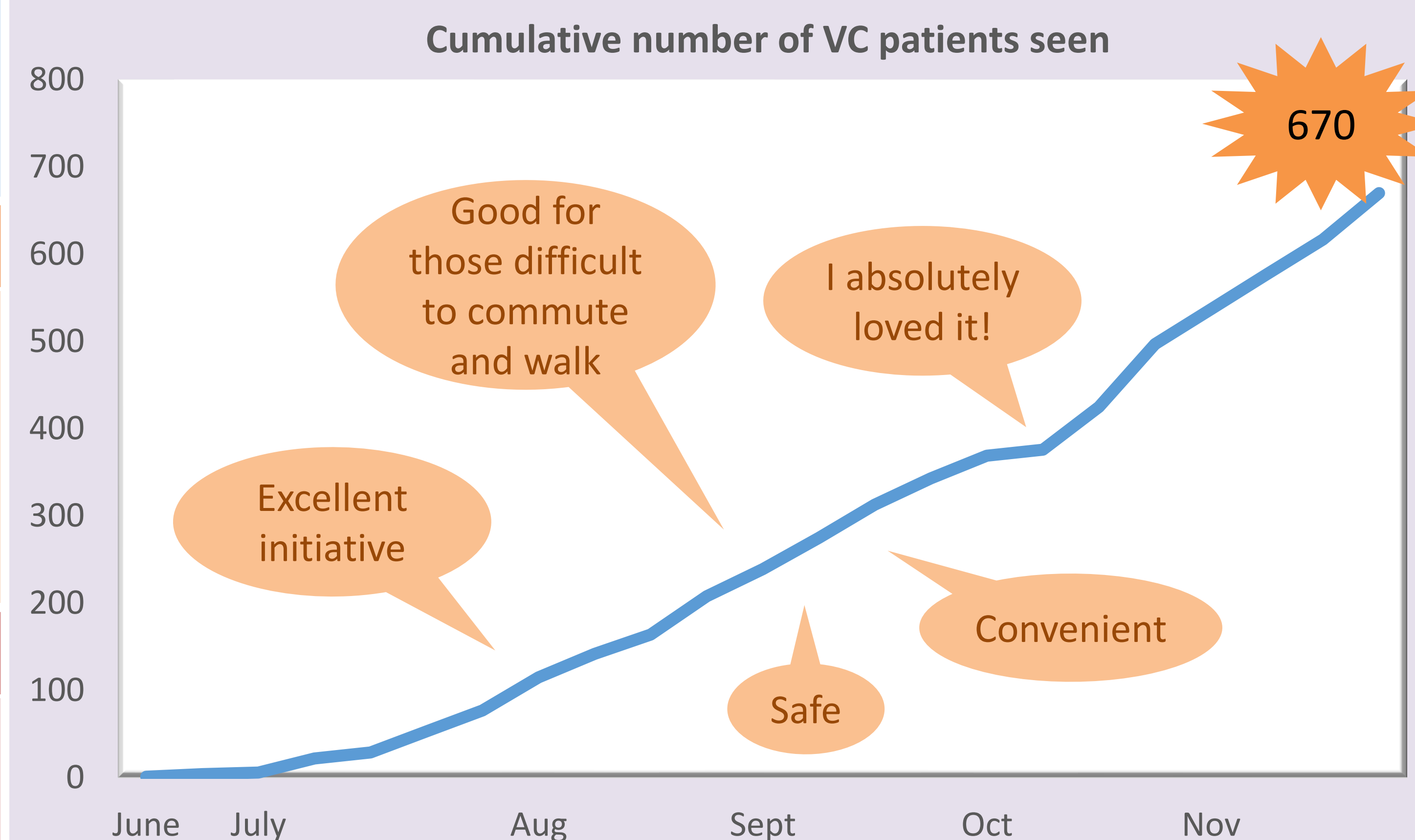
- Operational work flow was finalized with application of lessons learnt from above
- Each polyclinic VC team was provided with hands-on training and a guidebook
- Medical doctors providing VC underwent an online training on telemedicine

ViCON GO LIVE: Official launch (July 2020)

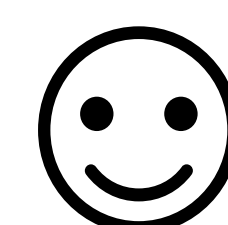
- All 8 polyclinics started providing ViCON for patients in phases.

Results

From 15 June to 31 August 2020, there were a total of 206 patients seen by ViCON@SHP. Satisfaction scores of patient were high, with 97.4% keen to use the service again. All felt at ease during consults, and that their privacy was respected. 100% felt that their experience was comparable to face-to-face consultations.



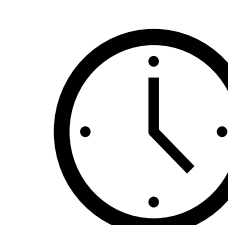
Post consultation patient survey



95.1%
Satisfied patients



89.7%
Waited < 10 mins



55
Average hours saved



97.4%
Agreeable with price of consultation

Consultation

- 100% I felt at ease speaking to the doctor over video consultation
- 97.4% I felt that the doctor was able to adequately assess my medical condition over video consultation.
- 100% I felt my privacy was respected.
- 100% My experience of a video consultation is comparable to a face-to-face clinic consultation.
- 97.4% I will likely use video consultation for future consultation.

Process

- 94.9% Set up and use of video consultation was simple
- 94.9% Video was of good quality
- 97.4% Sufficient information and guidance were provided before the video consultation
- 97.4% Arrangement of the appointment was convenient
- 84.6% The process for payment was simple and convenient
- 94.9% The process for collection of medications was simple and convenient.

* Feedback from 39 patients for the month of August 2020

Conclusion

ViCON@SHP has helped extend our care capacity to patients via remote means, ensuring their safety during a pandemic while providing the same quality consultation. Our patients and their care givers have benefited from the convenience and time saved. Given the positive feedback and good value proposition, ViCON@SHP is a sustainable addition to our services. Future plans are to include other chronic diseases for video consultation. Processes are currently being further streamlined to simplify and enhance user experience. Use of break out rooms in Zoom are being explored to allow for seamless appointment making, consultation and teledispensing services in one session.