

Does virtual health care work for adults with developmental disabilities?



Learn more about the research paper [here](#)

Why did we do this research?

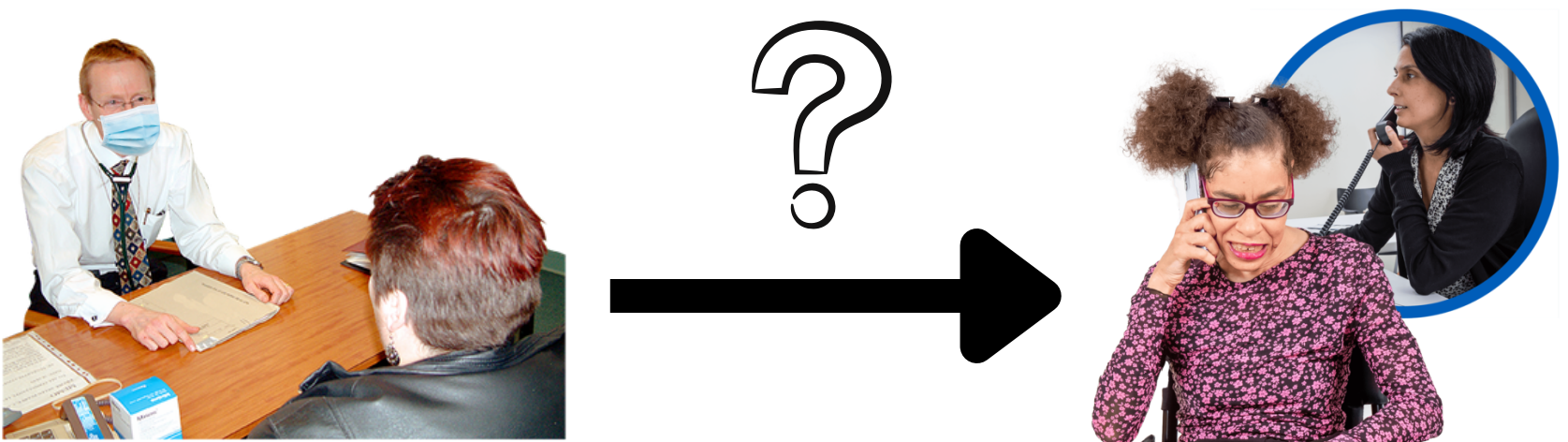


When COVID started, patients could not go see their doctors like they used to.



People had more appointments by phone, on the computer or tablet. This is called **Virtual Care**.

We wanted to know what patients with developmental disabilities, families, staff and family doctors thought about switching to **virtual care**.



What did we do?

We spoke to 38 people in Ontario by video and phone about **virtual care**.



11 adults with developmental disabilities



13 family members



5 support staff



9 family doctors

What did we learn?

One size does not fit all.

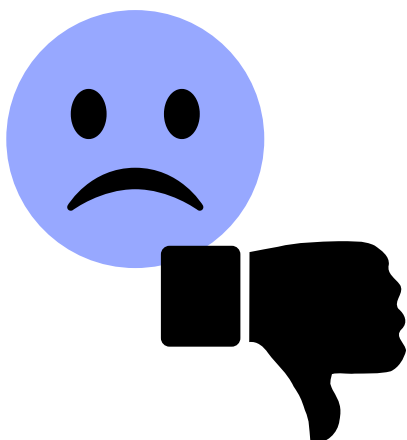
For some patients, virtual care was easier.

They didn't have to travel, felt less nervous, and it took less time.



For other patients, virtual care was harder.

It was harder to explain things, harder to feel included, and be involved in the visit.



What did we learn?

If we want virtual care to be really good, we have to think about 5 things:



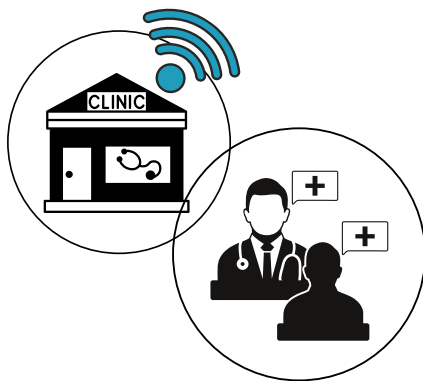
The patient and what they know and can do



Where the patient lives, what kind of health problem they have



Who helps the patient and what they know and can do



What the doctor knows and what they can do to help the patient



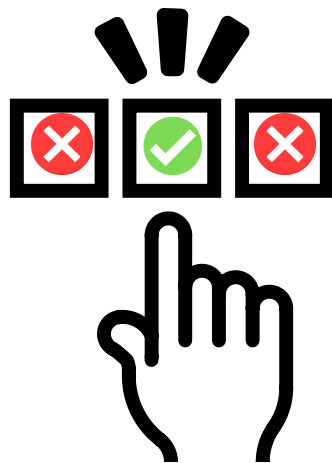
The reason for the appointment

What does this mean?

For some people, it is easier and more helpful to have their doctor visit on the phone, tablet, or computer.

But some people still need to come into the doctor's office.

People with developmental disabilities should be able to choose what is best for them.



We need to help patients with disabilities, doctors and caregivers learn how to do good video and phone appointments.

This guide was created by the H-CARDD program and staff at CAMH.

It is from the article called Accessibility of virtual primary care for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities: a qualitative study.

We thank the self-advocate advisors who worked together with our team to create this easy read guide.

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