

## P02-306

### CLINICIANS' ATTITUDES TO THE USE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING FOR PSYCHIATRIC CONSULTATIONS

R. Wynn<sup>1,2</sup>, S. Bergvik<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Dept of Clinical Psychiatry, University of Tromsø,* <sup>2</sup>*Dept of Specialised Psychiatric Services, University Hospital of North Norway, Tromsø, Norway*

**Aims:** Videoconferencing (communicating with a two-way sound/picture system) may help reduce travelling and may save time and money for patients and the health care system. Despite the fact that studies have found videoconferencing as good as face-to-face interactions for certain therapies, few in Norway use this tool routinely for consultations with patients. We examine clinicians' experiences with videoconferencing and their attitudes to using this tool for psychiatric consultations.

**Method:** Qualitative interviews were carried out with five MDs and six clinical psychologists with videoconferencing experience. They were asked about their experiences with videoconferencing and about their thoughts about using videoconferencing for consultations. Data analysis was inspired by Grounded Theory.

**Results:** While they generally were positive to the idea of conducting consultations by means of videoconferencing, they had little experience in doing so and were worried that videoconferencing may be less effective than face-to-face consultations. A central worry was that communicating is more difficult by means of videoconferencing and that subtle signals may be missed. They were also concerned about how they will be able to perform such tasks as demonstrating empathy. They expressed concern about possible technical problems and an increased total work-load. Some thought that establishing a system for training and assisting clinicians in their videoconsultations will increase use.

**Conclusions:** The clinicians had little experience with using videoconferencing for consultations. Despite some worries relating to relational, practical and technical matters, most were positive. Establishing a system for training and assisting clinicians may increase the use of this tool for consultations.