

## Patients' Satisfaction with Online Healthcare Services During Covid-19 Pandemic in Georgia

**Mariam Saatashvili**

Tbilisi State University, Georgia

**Nato Pitskhelauri**

Tbilisi State University, Georgia

**Nino Chikhladze**

Tbilisi State University, Georgia

### Abstract:

Telemedicine plays a crucial role in improving healthcare access, especially in underserved and remote areas, by providing timely diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up through online consultations. This service reduces healthcare costs, enhances continuity of care, facilitates chronic disease management, and supports emergency situations. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of telemedicine in ensuring healthcare delivery during public health crises. In Georgia, a national initiative to monitor COVID-19 patients via online clinics demonstrated the adaptability of the healthcare system to provide care remotely.

This study aimed to evaluate patients' opinions on the online clinic services offered in the Shida Kartli region of Georgia during the pandemic. A cross-sectional survey was conducted between April and June 2022, with 402 participants who met inclusion criteria, including a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. Data were collected via a 16-question questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS, including descriptive statistics and bivariate analysis. The results revealed that a majority of participants were satisfied with doctor-patient communication (81%) and found online consultations helpful for managing COVID-19. Satisfaction with the overall service was primarily positive, with 53% satisfied and 23% very satisfied. Statistically significant associations were found between service satisfaction and communication frequency, the type of consultation, and future use of telemedicine. Participants who had regular communication with doctors and those who were satisfied with online consultations were more likely to report a higher level of satisfaction. Suggestions for improvement included hiring more physicians and increasing the number of emergency medical teams. The findings emphasize the potential of telemedicine to address healthcare needs during emergencies, but also point to areas where improvements could be made, especially in terms of communication and resource allocation.

Telemedicine proved to be an effective healthcare response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Georgia, with high satisfaction levels among participants. The study highlights the need for continuous improvements in telehealth services to ensure equitable and efficient healthcare delivery in future public health crises.

### Keywords:

Healthcare, Telemedicine, Pandemic, Patients' satisfaction.