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Singapore develops guide for COVID-19 remote consultation

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Primary care health workers now have a guide for conducting remote consultation of suspected COVID-19 patients, developed by a team of researchers from Singapore and the UK.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face examination of patients has been restricted in many countries as people self-isolate at home, leading to an increasing demand for telemedicine.

To help doctors adapt to the need for more remote assessments, a team comprising Associate Professor Josip Car at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), Professor Trisha Greenhalgh from the University of Oxford and Professor Gerald Koh at the National University of Singapore collaborated to develop a guide.

The work was published in peer-reviewed medical journal The BMJ in March, and has since been incorporated in the UK-based National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) rapid guideline on COVID-19, on managing suspected or confirmed pneumonia in adults in the community.

NICE provides authoritative guidance for appropriate treatment and care of patients within the National Health Service in England and Wales. Its resources are widely referred to by clinicians around the world, including Singapore.

The guide is expected to be a helpful tool for primary care health workers, as doctors, clinics and hospitals embrace telemedicine during the pandemic.