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### BACKGROUND

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital Telehealth system has skyrocketed as it complies with the social distancing protocols. Our nonprofit Tohid Health Organization comprises of physicians/ residents/ fellows from the USA, UK, Pakistan and UAE, established a global WhatsApp 24/7 daily Helpline. The data of 273 queries from March to October 2020 has been presented here.

### METHODS

This study is a large global project where 240 people queried information on COVID-19 via a phone app, globally. Later on, we conducted a study on the same people via survey on the app to estimate the outcomes of digital health. We also did a literature review, reviewed 40 articles, included 6 in this review.

### RESULTS

Among the 273 inquiries, 255 (93.41%) contacted to relieve COVID-19 Pandemic induced panic/anxiety. People asked about symptoms and treatment of COVID, vaccine development, number of cases in their regions, navigation to quarantine centers/hospitals. 2 questions were solely related to psychiatry, 6 to Medicine, 2 to pulmonology, 2 hematology, 3 hepatology, 2 Ob/Gyn, and 3 gastroenterology.

Fig 2: Results of survey responses (n=107)

67.1%	responded that online-health-resources are beneficial to alleviate COVID-19 pandemic-induced stress/anxiety
66.2%	reported to continuing online health services after pandemic
44.4%	reported lack of physical interaction with doctor as disadvantage
36.8%	comfort in using in tele-mental-health
35.9%	tele-health saves times in waiting areas

Our literature review showed COVID-19 psychosocial helpline by psychiatrists provided psychological support to the general population and medical staff<sup>1, 2</sup>. A COVID-19 telephone helpline showed increased psychosocial support to the people.<sup>3</sup> Our non-profit organization “Tohid Health” is continuing its phone app to provide health information. The COVID-19 pandemic is on going and our data is continuing. In the next phase we will look at the impact of these services.

### CONCLUSION

During COVID-19-Pandemic, digital health has increased access to mental health care. Benefits of digital/tele-health include reduced risk of infection. The drawbacks include poor patient-doctor relationship, lack of familiarity to technology use, reimbursement concerns, and lack of confidentiality.

#### References:

1. Iqbal et. al (2020) COVID-19-related issues on tele-counseling helpline in Bangladesh. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.1111/abpy.12407>
2. Peppou, L. E., Ecanomou, M., Skali, T., & Papageorgiou, C. (2020). From economic crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis: evidence from a mental health helpline in Greece. *European archives of psychiatry and clinical neuroscience*, 1–3. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00406-020-01165-4>
3. Y. Zgueb, S. Bourgou, A. Neffeti, B. Amamou, J. Masmoudi, H. Chebbi, N. Somrani, A. Bouasker *Psychological crisis intervention response to the Covid 19 pandemic: a Tunisian Centralised protocol. Psychiatry Res., 2020(2020), Article 112895, 10.1016/j.psychres*

Figure 1: Participants field of questions

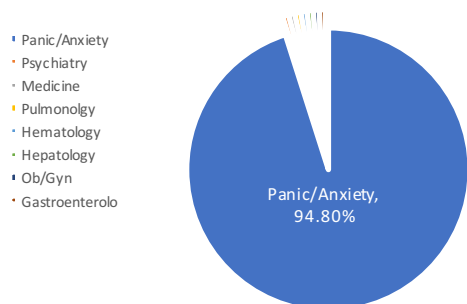
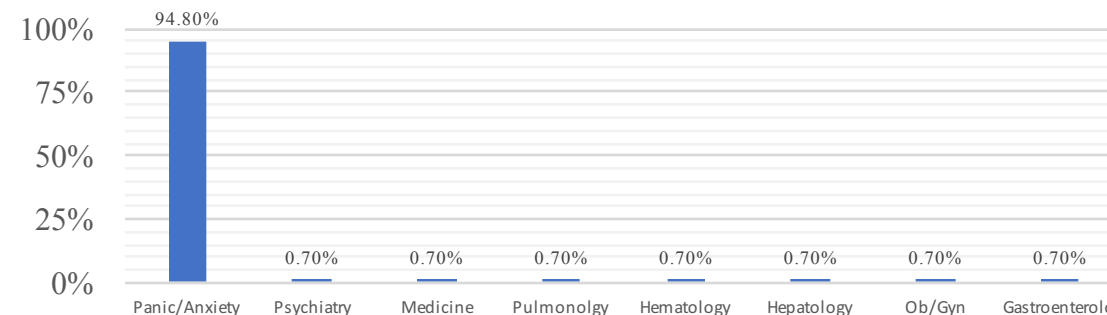


Figure 2: Sample Participants questions response



# TELEHEALTH IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19: BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF DIGITAL HEALTH IN IMPROVING EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING – DATA ANALYSIS, A GLOBAL SURVEY AND LITERATURE REVIEW



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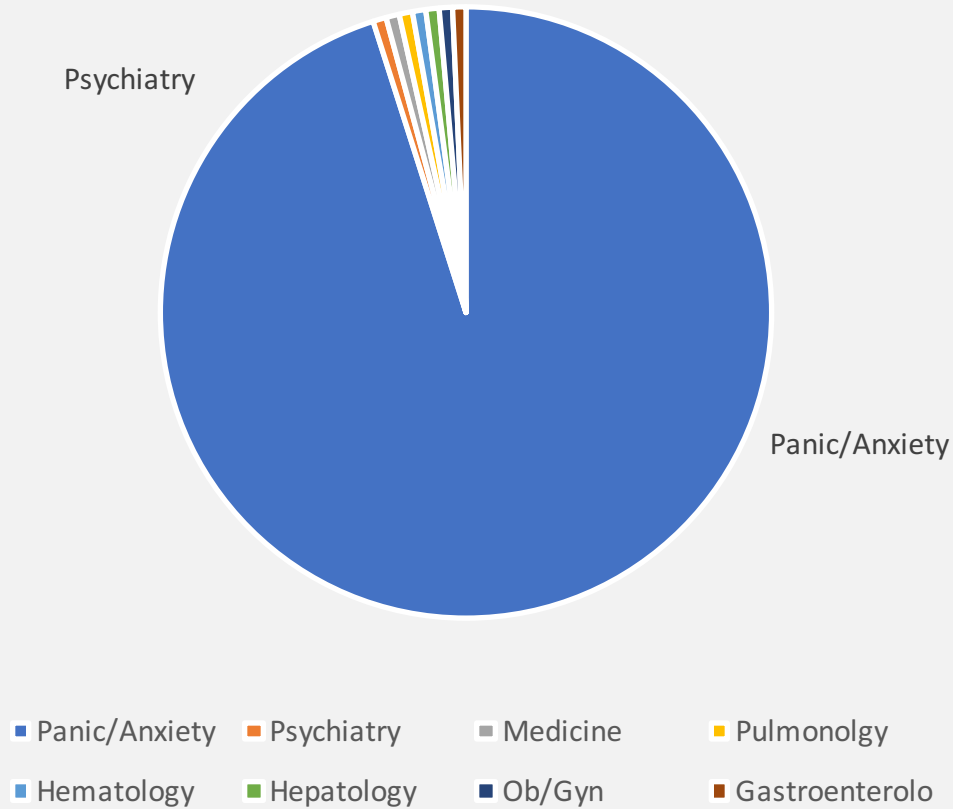


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