

## **An Evaluation of Patients' Perception of Web-Based Follow-up Clinic Appointments**

**Introduction and Objectives:** National Health Service (NHS) organisations are continually seeking for ways to ensure the efficient use of limited funds available to them. Outpatient clinics have always been a focus of cost-saving measures. However finding ways to reduce these without compromising the quality of patient care has been challenging. An alternative to traditional outpatient consultation is the telephone follow-up clinic and this is being used with some success in certain NHS trust. We sought to investigate the acceptability of web-based follow-up consultations among a cohort of our urological patients.

**Materials and Methods:** This was a questionnaire-based study involving 108 patients who had undergone prostate/sling procedures between November 2010 and April 2011.

**Results:** We had a 73% response rate. The mean ages were 71 years for men and 65 years for women. Only 58% of respondents had access to regular internet facilities. Among these, only 15% used the Internet to get information about their treatments. Of respondents, 76.9% preferred traditional follow-up in the outpatient clinic. Only 28% of the respondents did not like the idea of web-based follow-up consultations.

**Conclusions:** Majority of patients still prefer the traditional outpatient follow up with a doctor/nurse. However there is some prospect for web-based follow-up services as only a small proportion of respondents completely disliked the idea.