



Physiotherapy  
Research  
Foundation

# Telehealth by physiotherapists in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic

Interim Report - October 2020



# TELEHEALTH BY PHYSIOTHERAPISTS IN AUSTRALIA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## AN AUSTRALIAN STUDY

This research is a collaboration between the University of Melbourne, University of Queensland and Flinders University and is funded by the Physiotherapy Research Foundation.

The research study was developed with input from clinicians, telehealth experts, business owners and funding bodies to evaluate the effectiveness and value of physiotherapy treatment delivered via telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project measured the following objectives:

- the characteristics of physiotherapists who implemented telehealth services
- the nature of the services
- the types of patients who utilised telehealth physiotherapy services
- the types of conditions that were treated and their management
- patient outcomes and experiences
- consultation features

This information will be used to advocate for ongoing funding of telehealth services by physiotherapists. It is a cross-sectional online survey with ethics approval obtained through the University of Melbourne.

## Participation eligibility?

Participating physiotherapists are:

- registered to practice in Australia.
- working in private practice or community health.
- delivering physiotherapy care via video conference.

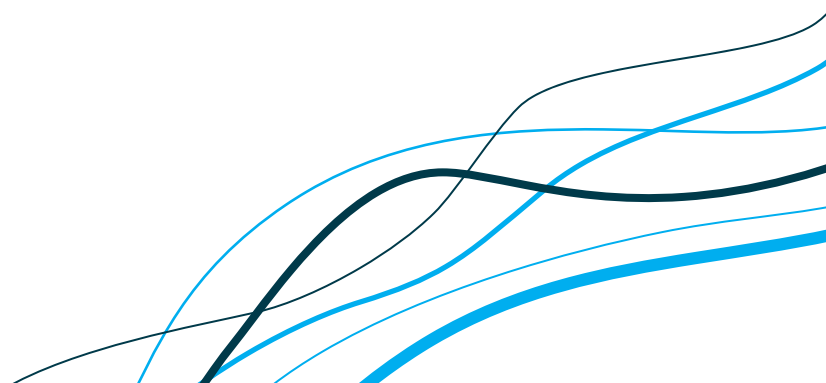
## Project timeline

- Expression of interest – April 2020
- Physiotherapist survey – May 2020
- Patient survey, first round – May 2020 onwards.
- Patient survey, final round – November 2020.

The project will be completed in December 2020 and the final report will be published in March 2021.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## Physiotherapist summary

### Total surveyed

People

**212** PHYSIOTHERAPISTS SURVEYED

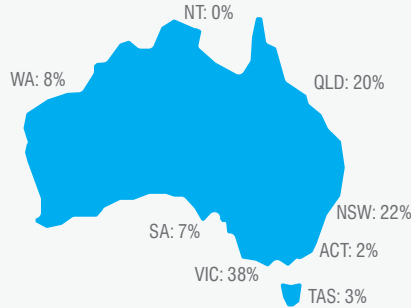


WOMEN 73%

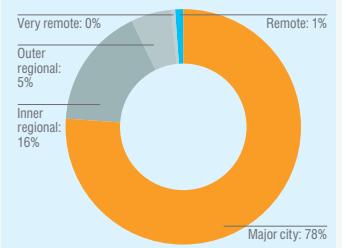
MEN 27%

### Location

State

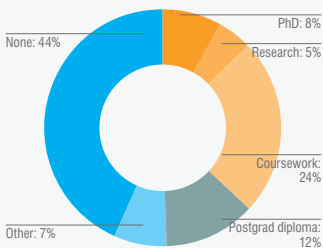


Region

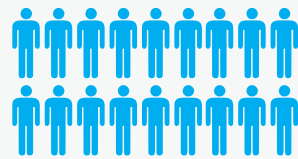


### Physiotherapist experience

Postgraduate qualifications



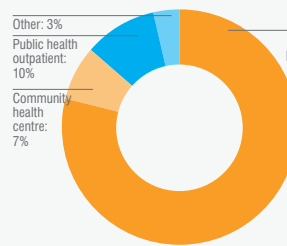
Physiotherapy experience



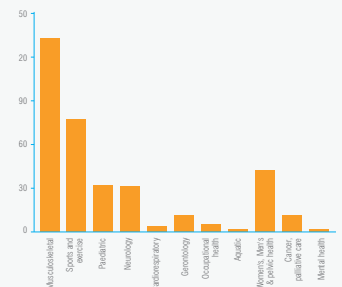
**18.4 YRS**

### Clinic type

Practice(s)



Predominant focus of clinic



### Training conducted

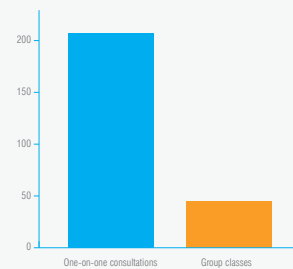
Prior training for telehealth delivery



Online training: **10%**  
In-person training: **4%**  
No training: **86%**

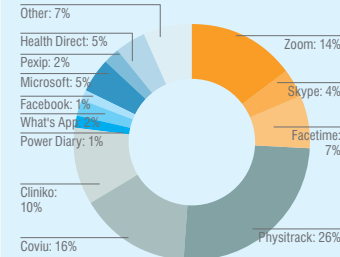
### Telehealth consult types

Video conferences (VC)

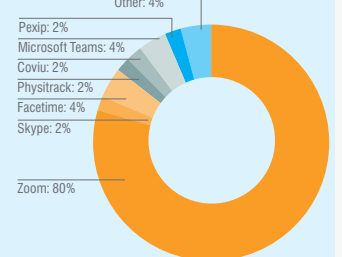


### Platform types

One-on-one session

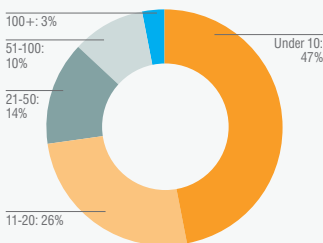


Group classes

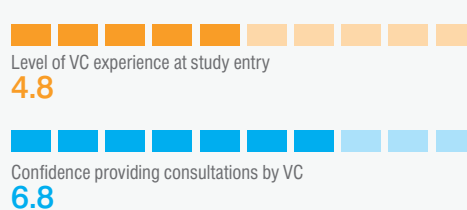


### Physiotherapist offering Telehealth one-on-one session

How many patients had you treated by VC prior to COVID-19?



Physio one-on-one VC experience (out of 10)



Duration of one-on-one session

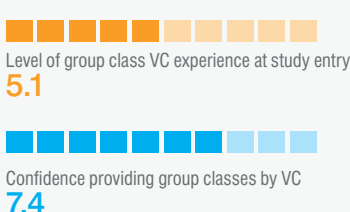


Face to face initial consultation duration: **49.2**

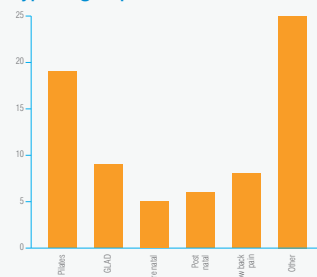
VC initial consultation duration: **48.2**

### Physiotherapist offering Telehealth group classes

Physio group VC experience (out of 10)



Type of group class



Group class size



Do you set a max number of patients per VC group class? **73%**



If yes, what is the maximum number set? **7.8**

Duration of group class

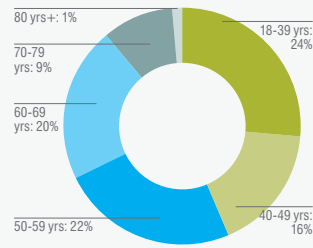


Group class duration (mins): **50.23**

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

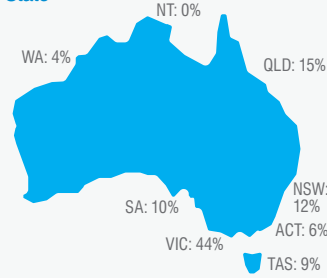
## Total surveyed

People  
**388** PATIENTS SURVEYED

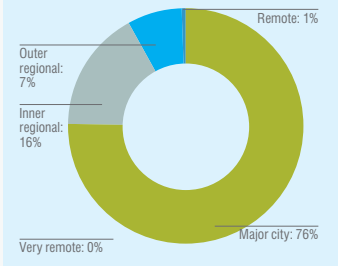


## Location

### State

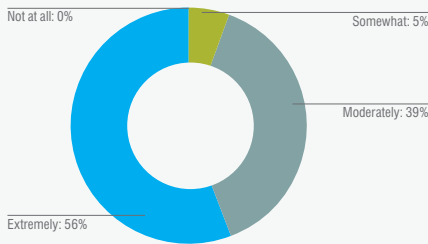


### Region

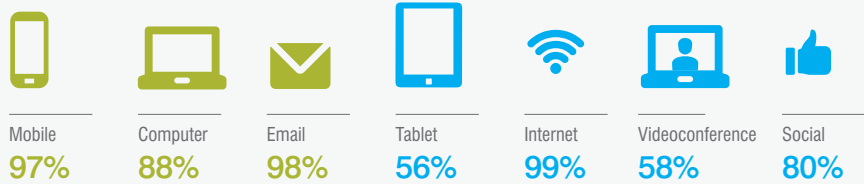


## Technical experience

### Confidence using technology in day to day life

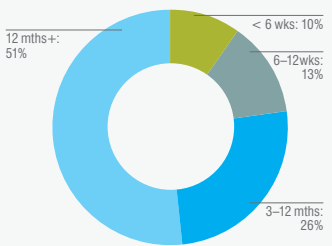


### Use technology more than once per week

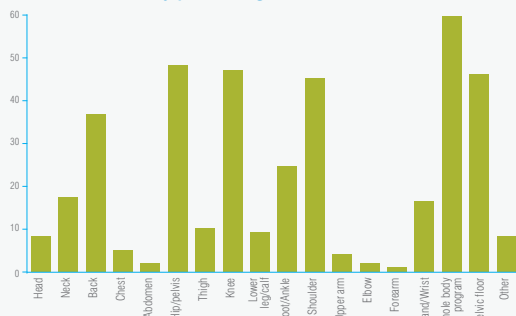


## Treatment background

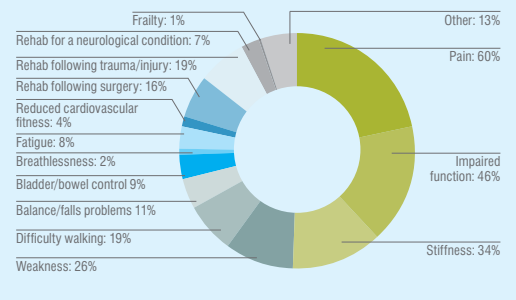
### How long have you have the problem



### Predominant body part being treated

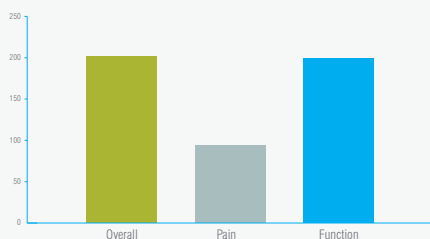


### Main reasons sought treatment

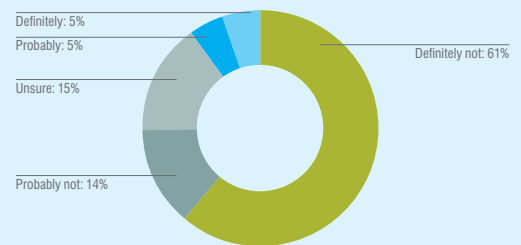


## Post treatment

### Global rating of change improvement

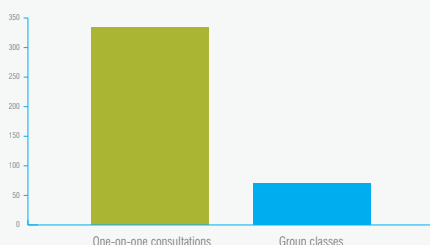


### How likely to now consider surgery



## Telehealth platform types

### Which video conferences services



## Telehealth experience

### Experience with VC technology (0-10)



# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## Patient video conference (VC) one-on-one summary

### Telehealth consultations

Total number

**284** VC ONE-ON-ONE



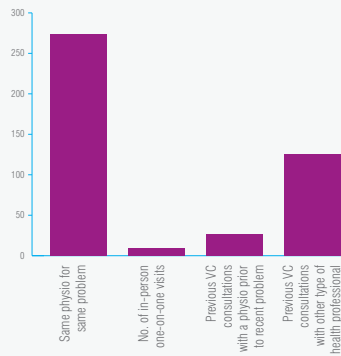
One-on-one VC consultations for this problem

**3.5**

One-on-one VC of overall physio treatment for this problem

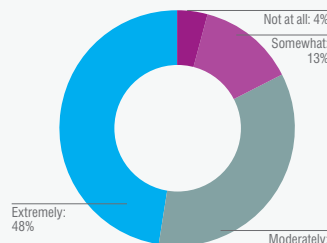
**54%**

Previous consultations

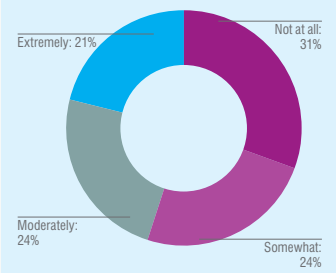


### Would you recommend Telehealth

How effective was the care for your problem?



How likely would you be to choose VC for physio after the pandemic?



### Telehealth payment overview

Duration



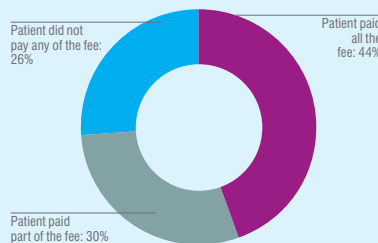
One-on-one initial consultation duration

**38.1**

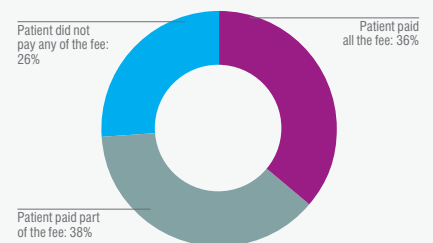
One-on-one review consultation duration

**33.1**

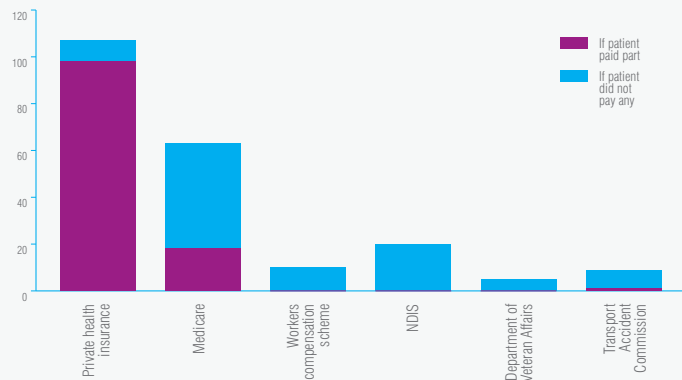
Who paid for initial consultation?



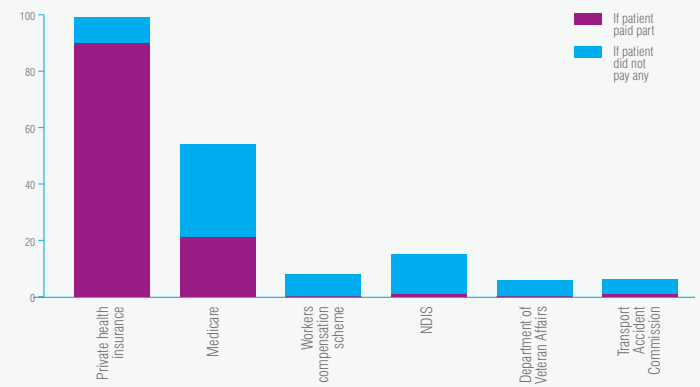
Who paid for review consultation?



Who else paid for the initial consultation?

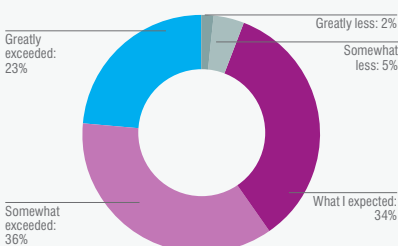


Who else paid for the review consultation?

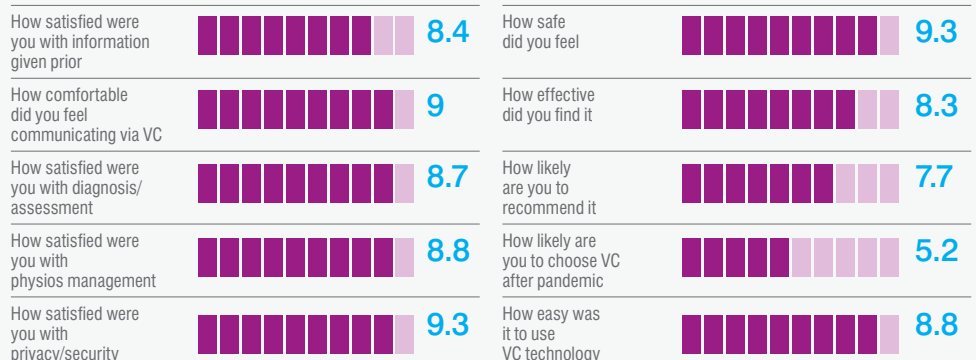


### Telehealth Satisfaction

Regarding overall expectations of one-on-one VC treatment

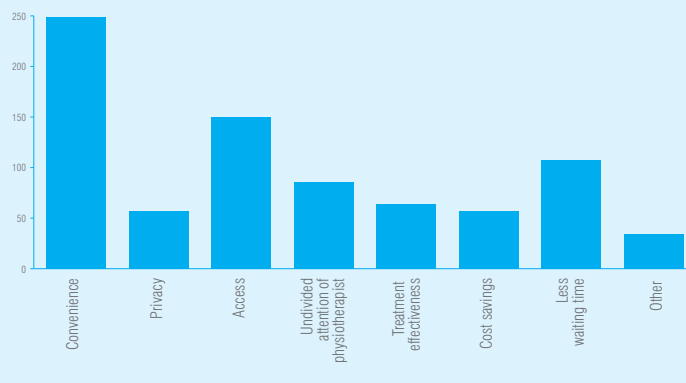


Satisfaction out of 10

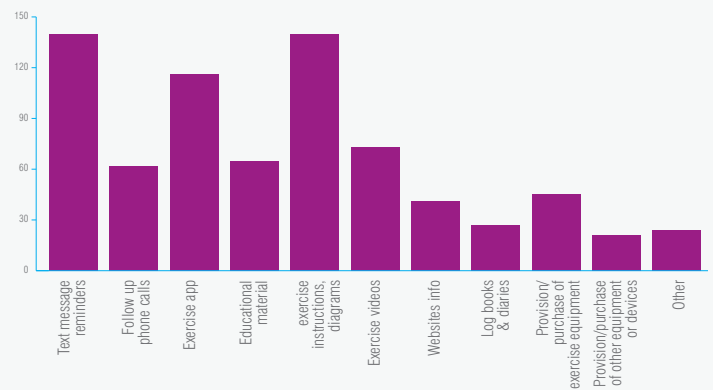


### Telehealth Satisfaction (continued)

What did you value about physio by VC

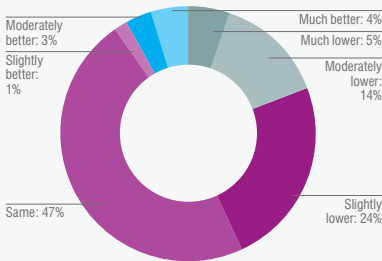


Did the physio provide you with:

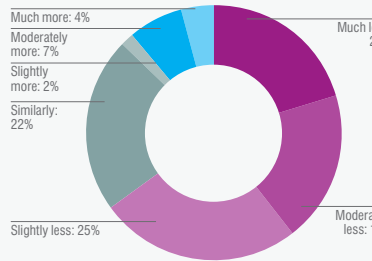


### Treatment comparisons

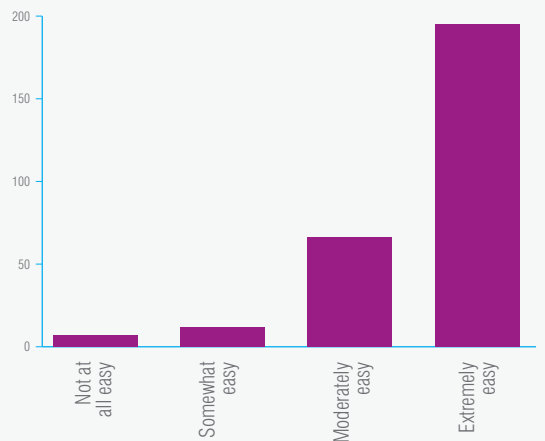
How would you rate quality of VC care compared to in-person care for this problem



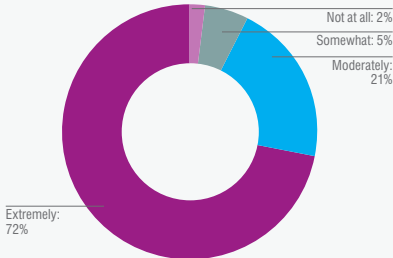
How would you rate VC physio compared to manual/hands on treatment?



How easy was it to use the technology required?

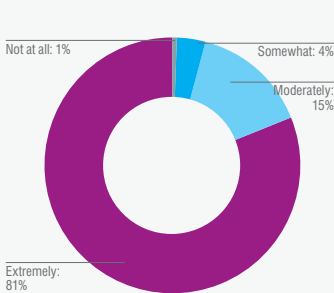


How satisfied were you with the physio's management?

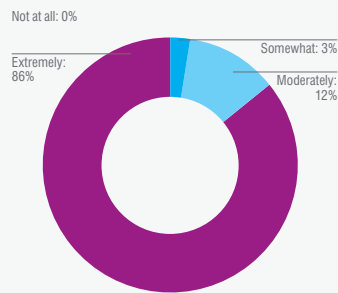


### Telehealth safety

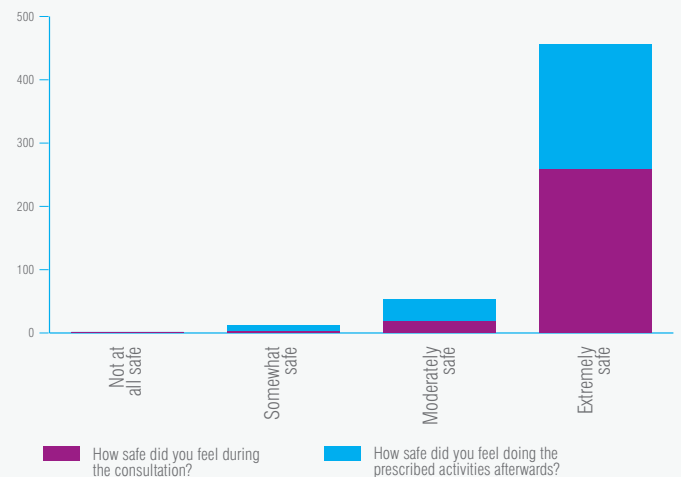
How comfortable did you feel communicating with the physio?



How satisfied were you with privacy/security during the consultation(s)?



How safe did you feel during the consultation and what was prescribed?



How safe did you feel during the consultation? How safe did you feel doing the prescribed activities afterwards?

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## Patient video conference (VC) group class summary

### Telehealth consultations

Total number

**55** VC GROUP CLASSES

Number of VC group classes for this problem  
**19.1**

Percentage of one-on-one VC of overall treatment for this problem  
**53%**

Previous consultations

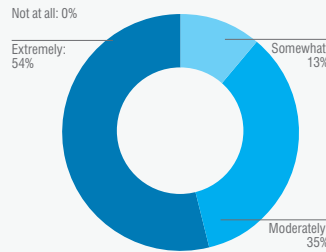


Had in-person group classes with same physio for same problem  
**67%**

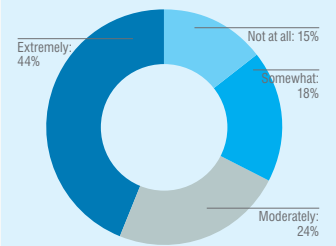
Number of in-person group classes  
**42.9**

### Would you recommend Telehealth

How effective were the group classes for your problem?

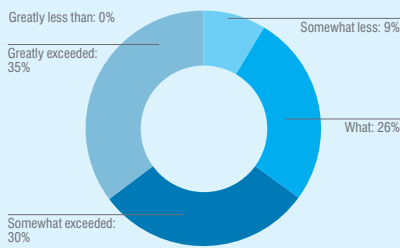


How likely would you be to choose VC for group classes after the pandemic?

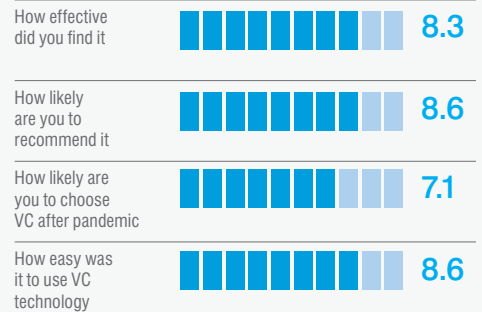
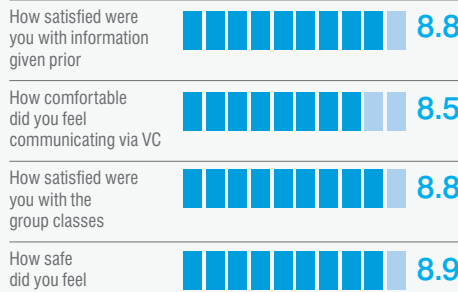


### Telehealth Satisfaction

Regarding overall expectations of one-on-one VC treatment

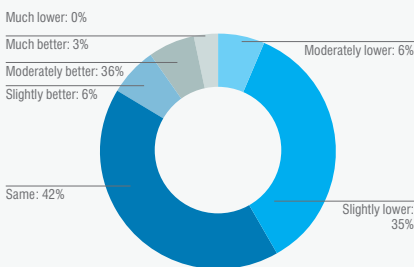


Satisfaction out of 10

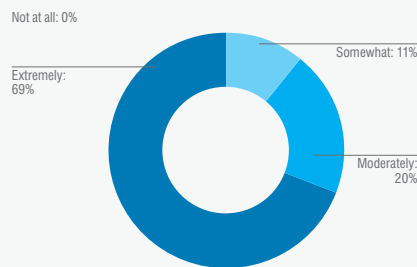


### Treatment comparisons

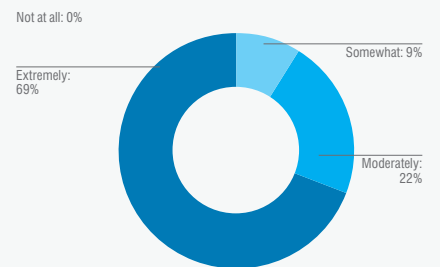
How would you rate quality of VC care compared to in-person care for this problem



How easy was it to use the technology required?

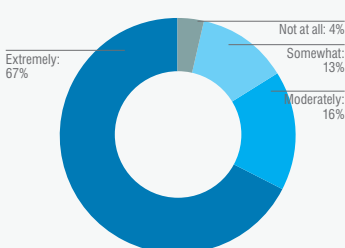


How satisfied were you with the physio's management?

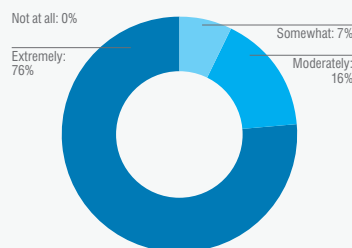


### Telehealth safety

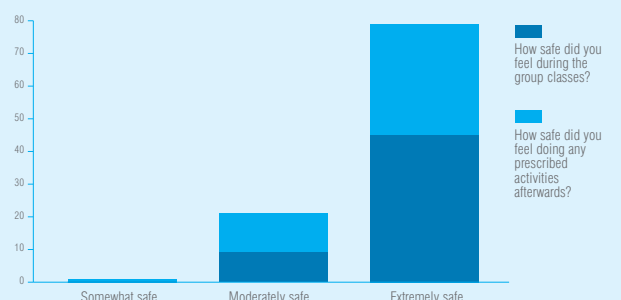
How comfortable did you feel communicating with the physio?



How satisfied were you with privacy/security during the group classes?



How safe did you feel during the group classes and what was prescribed?







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