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Volume 9, numéro 1, 2022

Congress October 2021

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1085647ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.26443/ijwpc.v9i1.325>

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Éditeur(s)

McGill University Library

ISSN

2291-918X (numérique)

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Citer ce document

Yaffe, M. (2022). The impact of virtual care on relationship centered care: Observations of a family physician. *The International Journal of Whole Person Care*, 9(1), 20–20. <https://doi.org/10.26443/ijwpc.v9i1.325>

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THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL CARE ON RELATIONSHIP CENTERED CARE: OBSERVATIONS OF A FAMILY PHYSICIAN

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Keywords: COVID-19, Virtual care, Doctor-patient relationship

The COVID-19 pandemic propelled many physicians and their patients into an unfamiliar world of virtual care. This presentation is based on the perceptions of a family physician/ teacher/ researcher with 43 years of interest in, and promotion of, a strong doctor-patient relationship. It will describe a protocol that governed how tele-medicine and video-conferencing took place over nearly 18 months in his practice. It will then describe observed positive and negative impacts for the patients, their family members, the physician, and members of the family medicine health care team. Interpretation will be made about what such observations mean for the doctor-patient relationship. ■