



Video Consultation Trends during COVID-19: Impact of Practice and System Characteristics within European General Practice, based on the Cross-Sectional PRICOV-19 Study

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Cross-sectional study in 38 countries on the organization of care in general practices during the COVID-19 pandemic

An exceptional collaboration between 48 research institutes

13 publications on the international PRICOV-19 database.

21 publications on the national PRICOV-19 databases.

...in addition, 8 national and 5 international PRICOV-19 papers are currently under review.



The questionnaire includes 53 items divided into six sections:







- patient flow (including appointments, triage, and management for routine care);
- infection control and prevention;
- information processing;
- communication;
- collaboration and self-care;
- practice and participant characteristics.

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Opinion Paper

Moving forward after the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons learned in primary care from the multi-country PRICOV-19 study

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Position paper

Moving Forward After the COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned in Primary Care

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge to primary care (PC), its organization, the people working in it, and its interfaces with the wider healthcare system. The fight against COVID-19 has emphasized the critical role of PC within the healthcare system: to serve as the first, and for most patients the only, point of contact with healthcare professionals.

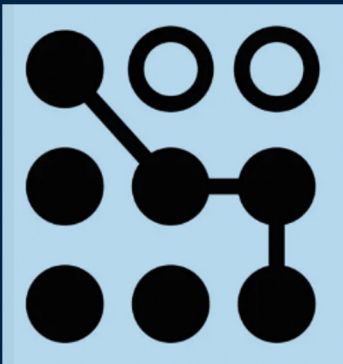
During the pandemic, general practitioners (GPs) had extensive responsibilities. These include providing care for COVID-19 patients, including severely ill patients not hospitalized due to a lack of hospital beds, treating patients with post-COVID sequelae, ongoing care for non-COVID patients, contributing to public health services, e.g. in vaccination programs, and acting as a point of trust for worried citizens.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a consortium of 48 research institutions, in collaboration with EQuIP rolled out the PRICOV-19 study(1). This study analysed how GP practices in 38 countries adapted to provide safe, effective, timely, person-centred, efficient, and equitable care during the pandemic. Over 5,500 GP practices filled out an online questionnaire. The study's scale and international design allow it to identify areas for improvement and contribute to developing strategies to better prepare for future crises. Understanding patient safety is critical for healthcare professionals in future pandemics and times of crisis. This position statement highlights the lessons that can be learned from the PRICOV-19 study.

Aims



To describe the variation in the use of video consultations in GP practices across Europe during COVID-19.



To explore the association between the use of video consultations and various characteristics at practice-level and at country-level.

Methods



Rapid literature search to support an evidence-based selection of PRICOV-19 survey items and additional questions aligned with our aims; we included five practice- and nine country-level characteristics, as well as characteristics of COVID-19 intensity in the analysis as independent variables.



Linear mixed model analysis at country-level and examined five models incrementally within a one-level random intercept regression model.

Characteristics

Practice-level

No. of patients with migration background and low language proficiency, compared to the avg. practice population

Main payment system

Type of employment for GPs

Number of patients listed

Location

Country-level

Areas with no or limited Internet access

Affordable Internet for nearly all persons

Video consultations can be billed/reimbursed

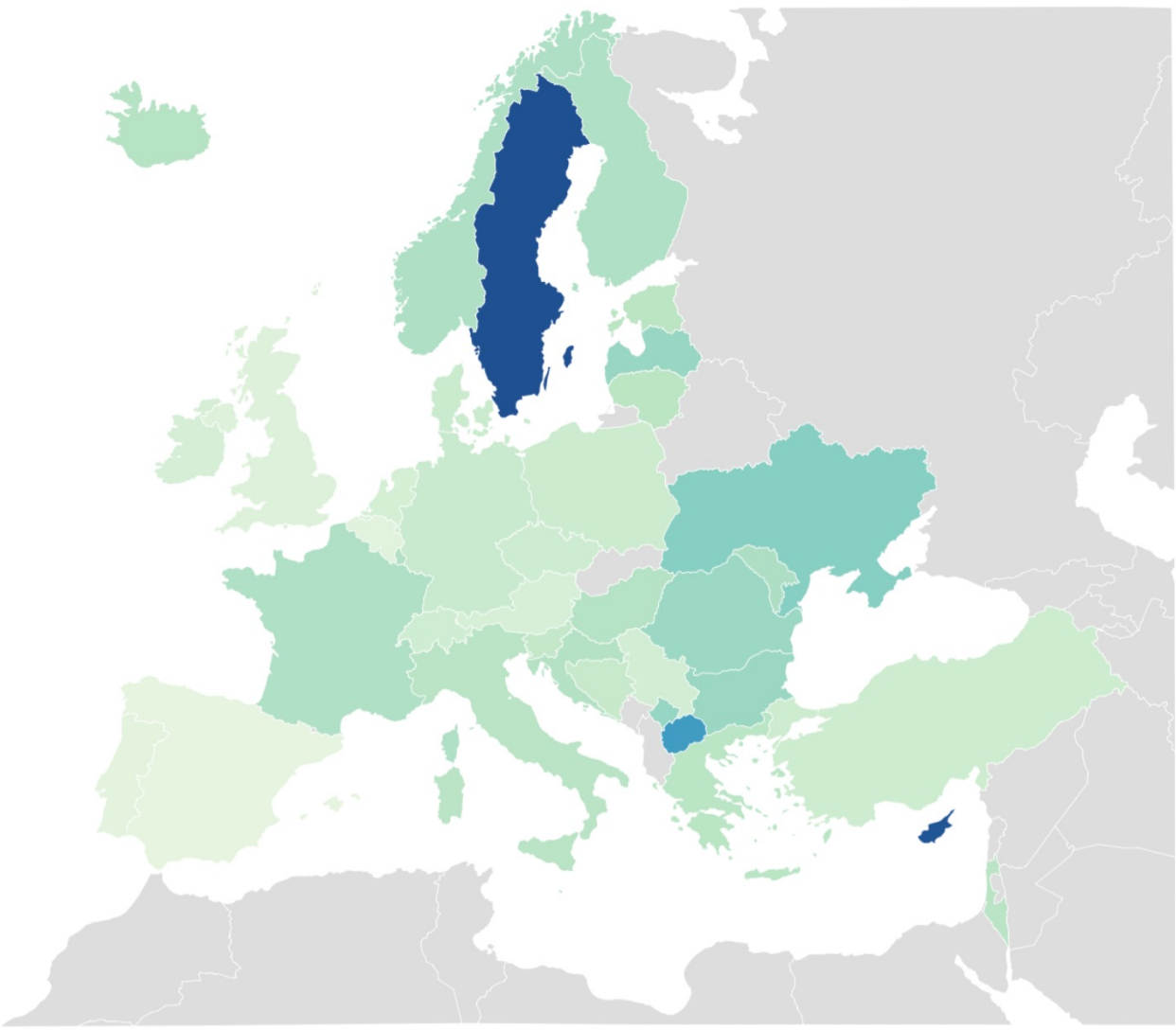
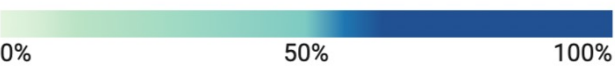
Definition of video consultation in place

Video used for all kinds of consultations

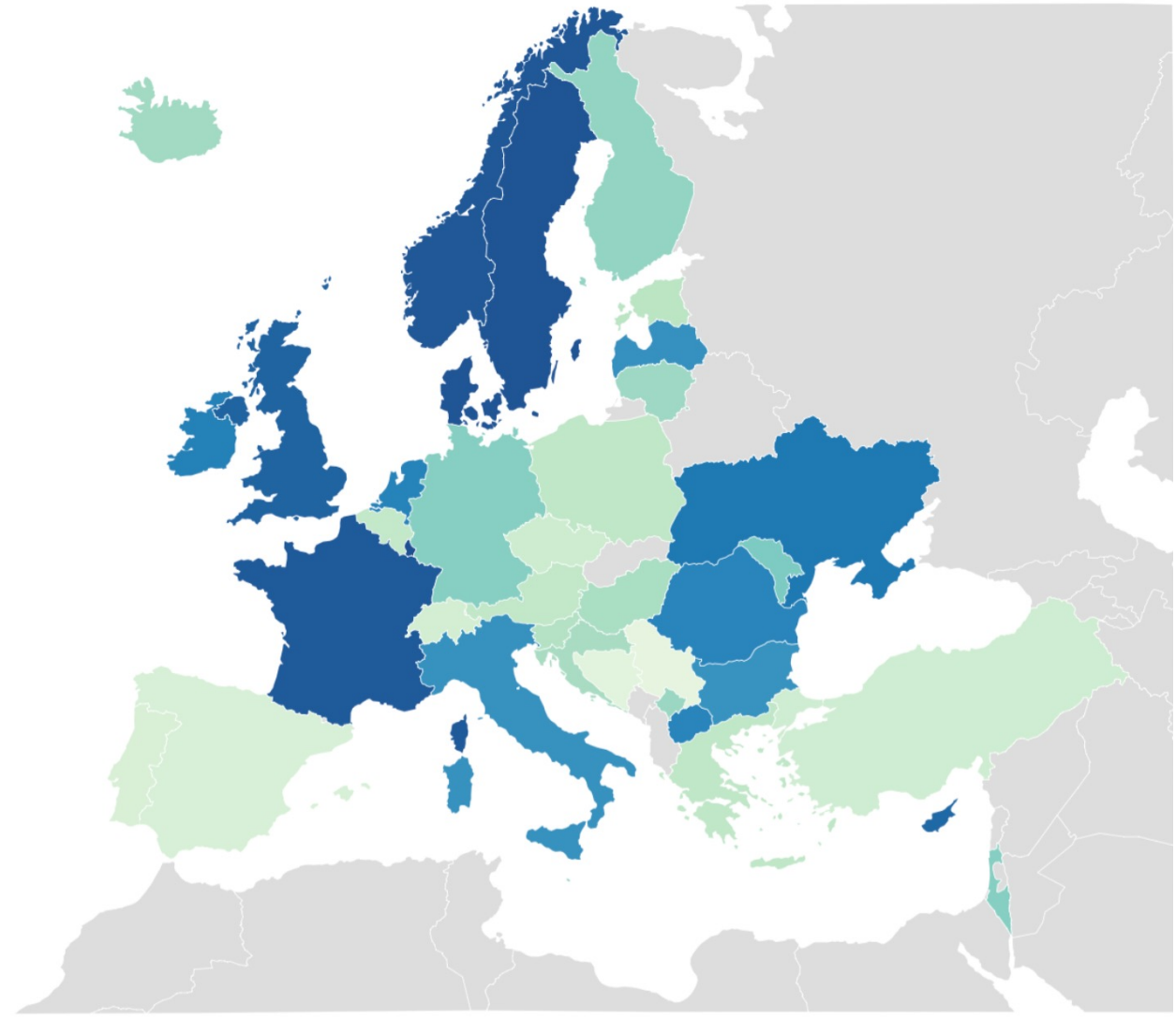
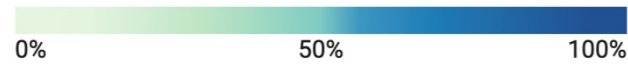
Video consultations offered to all patients

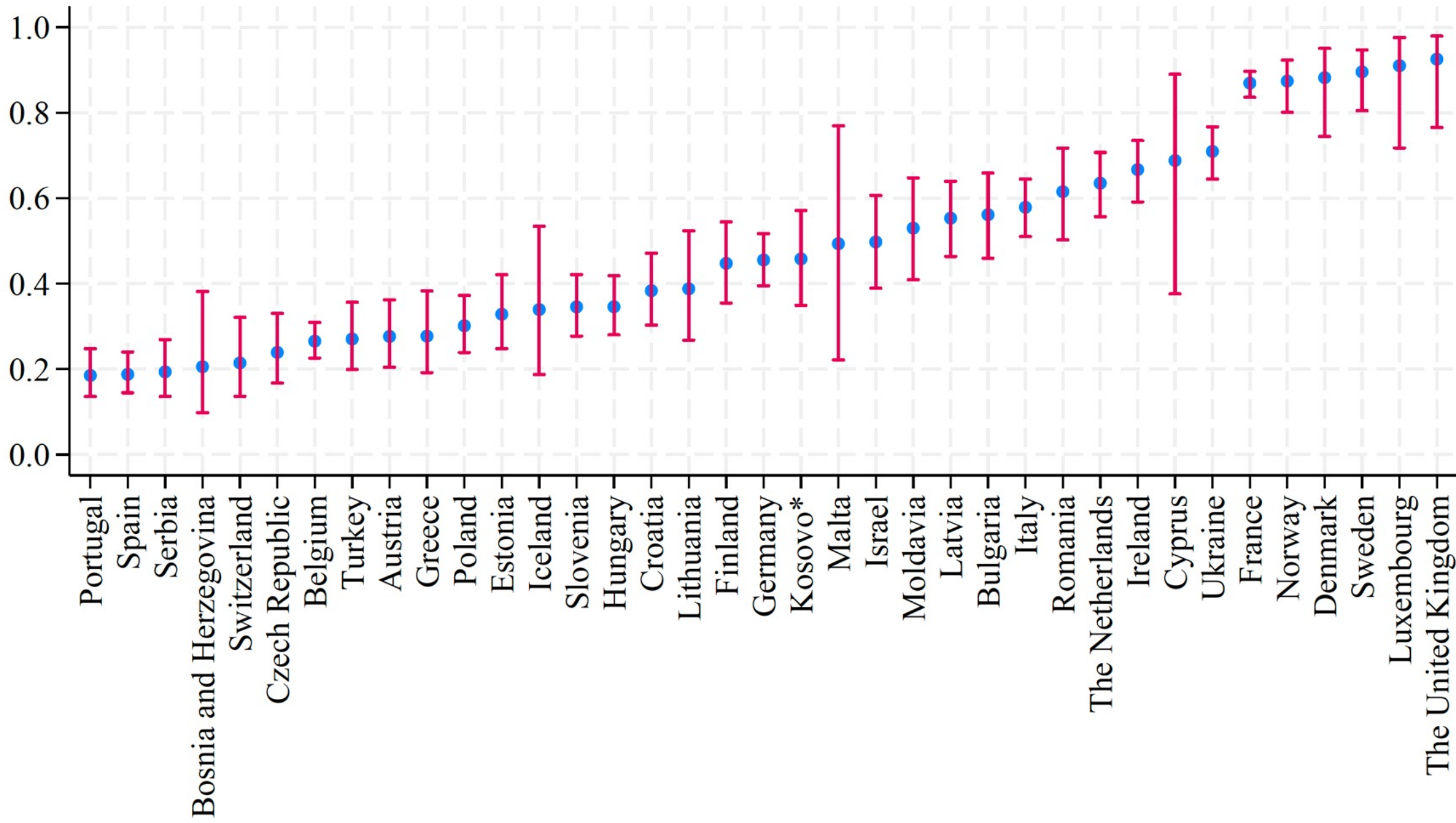
Guidelines on tele consultations in place

Video use in general practice before COVID-19



Video use in general practice during COVID-19





Results



Fewer than half of the participating GP practices from 38 countries had used video consultations during COVID-19 at the time of the survey.



Having more patients with migration background and low language proficiency, being self-employed, having more patients registered with the practice, and being urban-based were positively related to the use of video consultations.

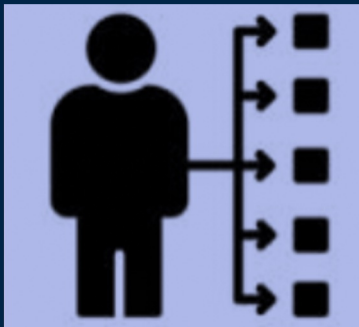


On country-level, only accessible and affordable Internet was significantly associated with use of video consultations.

Implications



Insights into specific **practice-level** characteristics that facilitated the use of video consultations in general practice across European countries during COVID-19.



Comprehensive cross-country comparison, highlighting that while some factors are universally influential; others are more context-dependent.

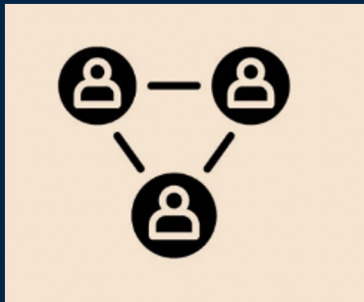


Importance of tailored strategies to promote the use of video consultations in general practice, considering practice-level AND broader characteristics.

Further research

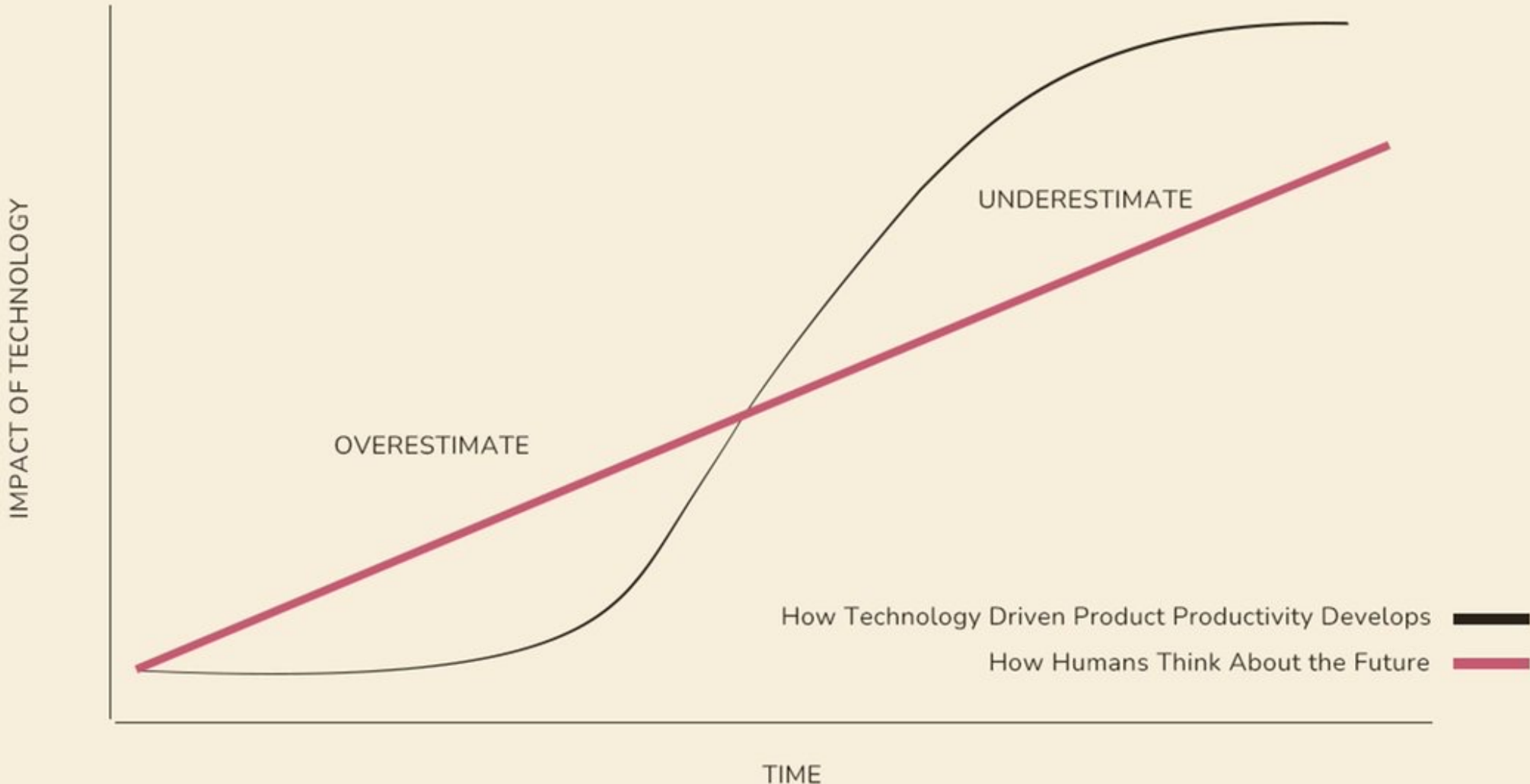


We need to develop robust measures of outcome measures at patient level, its cost-effectiveness, and the quality and safety of remote care.



Researchers should also develop a more nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay of factors influencing the uptake and effectiveness of video consultations by elucidating their impact.

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Thank You for Your Attention!