**Figure**

**Covid-19: remote consultations**

A quick guide to assessing patients by video or voice call.

1. **Set up**
   - Prepare yourself and decide how to connect.
   - Have current 'stay at home' covid-19 guidance on hand.

2. **Connect**
   - Make video link if possible, otherwise call on the phone.
   - Confirm the patient's identity:
     - Name
     - Date of birth
   - Note patient's phone number in case connection fails.
   - If possible, ensure the patient has privacy.

3. **Get started**
   - Quickly assess whether sick or less sick.
   - Rapid assessment:
     - If they sound or look very sick, such as too breathless to talk, go direct to key clinical questions.

4. **History**
   - Adapt questions to patient's own medical history.
   - Contacts:
     - Close contact with known covid-19 case
     - Immediate family members
     - Occupation risk group
   - History of current illness:
     - Date of first symptoms

5. **Examination**
   - Assess physical and mental function as best as you can.
   - Over phone, ask carer or patient to describe:
     - State of breathing
     - Colour of face and lips
   - Over video, look for:
     - General demeanour
     - Skin colour
   - Check respiratory function—ability to talk in full sentences is common in severe illness
     - How is your breathing?
     - Is it worse today than yesterday?
     - What does your breathing prevent you doing?

6. **Decision and action**
   - Advise and arrange follow-up, taking account of local capacity.
   - Likely covid-19 but well with mild symptoms:
     - Self-management:
       - fluids, paracetamol
     - Reduce spread of virus—follow current government 'stay at home' advice
   - Likely covid-19, unwell, deteriorating:
     - Arrange follow-up by video.
     - Monitor closely if you suspect pneumonia
     - Safety netting:
       - If feeling alone, someone to check on them

**Clinical characteristics**

Based on 1099 hospitalised patients in Wuhan, China:

- **Cough**
  - Temperature 37.5-38°C
  - Temperature >38°C
- **Fatigue**
- **Sputum**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Muscle aches**
- **Sore throat**
- **Headache**
- **Chills**
- **Nasal congestion**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Diarrhoea**

**Red flag**

- Covid-19:
  - Severe shortness of breath at rest
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Pain or pressure in chest
  - Cold, clammy, pale or cold, mottled skin
  - New confusion
  - Becoming difficult to arouse
  - Blue lips or face
  - Little or no urine output

**Other conditions, such as:**

- Neck stiffness
- Non-bleeding rash