**Telephone Triage Case Discussions during Covid-19**

**Resources for GP trainees, GPs and AHPs**

My name is Ali Hutchings and I am a GP working in Bristol and also a TPD involved in supporting GP trainees during their GP training.

I have been working with three of the Bristol GP trainees, Arla, Sarah and Suze, to develop some online resources. Alongside Andy Eaton, Somerset TPD, we have produced this series of case discussions with accompanying written resources. We are aiming to increase confidence, understanding and skills relevant to telephone triage - for both Covid-19 and other clinical presentations. We reflected on the reduction in face to face teaching and peer support in the current climate and felt this online format may be helpful.

The case discussions (each around 10 minutes duration) can be used alongside the series of tutorials on telephone triage produced by Andy, or in isolation if preferred. Each case has been recorded as an individual video so that you can choose to dip in and out viewing them in any order to suit your need/the cases you feel most relevant, or if time allows watch them as a collection.

The comments, both written and verbal, are just opinions and suggestions. We are not trying to tell you what you should and should not do in any particular case. We are hoping to prompt discussion, and aim to explore some, though not all, options around how we might address issues raised as a result.

We hope you find our work useful and that you keep well during these unique and challenging times we find ourselves working in.

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**Case 1 – Parental concern about a child with a fever, ?Covid-19**

*Summary;* Mum calling with concerns about a young child with a fever for six days.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Parental/patient worries about ability to access healthcare during Covid-19 restrictions
* Assessment of child when asleep and options for later assessment in OOH setting including telephone follow up / video consultation
* Logistics of seeing a child with ?Covid-19 when no easy access to car / other children in the house.

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**Case 2 – Adult with Covid-19 concern with comorbidities**

*Summary –* 41 year old with Type 1 Diabetes and HTN presenting with Covid-19 concerns.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Considering differential diagnosis to include, but not be isolated to Covid-19
* How to assess the degree of respiratory distress remotely via phone and video
* Discussion about what admission to hospital will add and when / how to arrange this if needed
* Logistics of seeing a patient face to face in with probable Covid-19

**The connection breaks up slightly near the start of this recording but resolves for the remainder.**

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**Case 3 – Relative (with medical training) calling with ?Covid-19 concerns about partner**

*Summary –* Wife (nurse) calling for advice about 67 year old partner at day five of illness with lethargy, cough and fever.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Reflections of why patients / relatives have chosen ‘today’ to call for advice when clinically situation seems stable
* Considering challenges of language barriers on telephone triage
* Considering how much assessment by relatives it is reasonable to rely on / ask them to take
* Consideration of what is helpful to include in safely netting during Covid-19 / what support and follow up can be offered to the patient / family

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**Case 4 – 3-year-old child with sunburn**

*Summary –* Mother calling concerned because her son has got a blistering rash on his ears, presumed sunburn.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Consider how to visually assess this rash within Covid-19 restrictions
* Debate around safeguarding concerns and how they may present in IUC / telephone consultations
* Consideration of what may lead a patient / carer to seek medical advice if the presenting problem is fairly minor.
* Reflection of different ways we can ask parents questions when considering safeguarding issues and presentations.

**Case 5 – Nursing home calling for advice about a very unwell patient.**

*Summary –* Nurse caring for 96-year-old lady who has been unwell but deteriorated significantly in the last 24 hours, asking for advice and support.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Consideration of issues raised in this case including management of patients symptoms, and clarification about ceiling of care / needs of nursing staff.
* How to optimise the assessment of the patient given we are speaking to a qualified nurse and considering other parties we could also liaise with.
* Reflecting that each party may have different priorities – the patient, nurse calling, the family and you as the clinician.
* Consideration of the need for face to face assessment, bearing in mind associated risks in Covid-19 pandemic.
* Discussion around the need to contact relatives of patients in care homes.
* Recognising the need to ensure the patients voice is considered, and heard, if feasible (and avoid the risks of making assumptions without clarification).
* Discussion of safety netting and follow up available to nursing home staff.
* Importance of supporting our colleagues, particularly in current difficult times.

**Please note that this case is longer than the other recordings (approx. 18 minutes).**

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**Case 6 – Deterioration >7 days after onset of Covid-19 symptoms.**

*Summary –* 61-year-old Day 8 of Covid symptoms now struggling to climb the stairs asking for advice on how to manage symptoms.

*Issues discussed in the video case discussion;*

* Discussion about what in this case is making us concerned and what we should / could do about this.
* Discussion about the options available to us – video assessment, face to face GP appointment or direct admission to hospital.
* Options for safety netting if after assessment admission is not deemed to be necessary.
* Brief discussion of Charlson Comorbidity Index which provides an estimated 10-year survival - [Charlson Score Tool](https://www.mdcalc.com/charlson-comorbidity-index-cci)