



Virtual Mediation with Clare: How Does it Work and What are the Advantages?

During the covid-19 pandemic, the nation switched to remote working and the NHS to remote consulting where possible.

Mediations were therefore carried out on platforms such as MS Teams and Zooms, which most GPs became familiar with pretty quickly.

Clare has found that remote mediation has worked very well. The process can be mimicked nicely using the online platforms - there is a joint meeting room, and there are separate private breakout rooms for individual confidential conversations to take place. Thoughts can be shared on an interactive whiteboard, and at the end of the process when the agreement is reached, it can be typed up and signed 'live' by all. This means there is no need to worry about the virtual nature of the mediation getting in the way of producing a legally-binding written agreement.

Of course, participants still have to actively participate in the process and must have their cameras on so that Clare can read the body language and facial expressions, but overall, Clare has found that participants are more relaxed (because they are at home or in their surgery rather than at some strange corporate location) and yet they are just as focussed.

GPs have found it very helpful to be able to keep on top of their admin during the mediation, when there are periods of downtime where Clare will be talking to others in a separate virtual breakout room.

Furthermore, some disagreements have become so fraught, that participants actually prefer the barrier of the screen; knowing that they don't have to sit in the same room as another person is a big advantage to virtual mediation.

Clare does offer a reduced rate for virtual mediation, and this is in addition to the savings that can be made from not having to pay for venue hire, catering, and travel expenses.