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Keynote abstract

The role of telehealth in Quebec's healthcare reform

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Abstract

The Montréal health region is divided into 12 health and social services networks (170,000 population each) responsible for the delivery of all and social services including hospital services, nursing home services, primary care services, rehabilitation services and homecare. Montréal's far Eastern network, CSSS de la Pointe-de-L'Île has the highest rate of chronic illness on the island of Montréal. Diabetes, hypertension, pulmonary obstructive disease and cardiac failure are the main chronic illnesses.

The CSSS decided to implement in September 2009, an innovative homecare program for managing chronically ill patients based on a system of bidirectional communication between the client and the health care professional through a telephone-based web system. Telus Healthcare Solutions are providing the technology along with the various pieces of equipment needed to collect the health status data required. The project has, as its objective, to provide services at home to 360 individuals using 120 patient stations including a touch screen and a telephone console connected to the Internet. Easy to use, this equipment constitutes the medium of communication and clinical exchange of data between the user and a healthcare professional and is the principal tool used to involve the patient in managing their own health.

It has been demonstrated that as patients learn how to better manage their chronic illness there is a reduction in hospital visits and hospitalizations. This should also improve emergency room utilization by reducing frequent users and providing alternatives to the patient when there is a crisis.

The program is being evaluated as to the improvements in the patient's health status, utilization of the system, and the patient's ability to manage their own chronic illness through the use of friendly technology connected with a health care provider.

Keywords

telehealth, chronic care, health network, integrated care
