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Conference Abstract

Integration of telehealth and telecare service in the Veneto region

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Abstract

Introduction: Chronic diseases have huge impact on healthcare systems and on the quality of life of patients affected. In Europe, for instance, CHF is the leading cause of hospitalization in the elderly, while COPD, at a world level, is predicted to become the third leading cause of death and the sixth leading cause of disability worldwide by the year 2020.

In the Veneto Region Social-Health plan for the next 3 years is quoted that it is necessary to pay more attention on the area of chronicity and there is, therefore, the need to define a new models of care characterized by a integration of health and social care. Following this the Veneto Region carried out a unique platform where the telecare and telehealth services are integrated. With this platform the clinical data and social needs of chronic patients are monitored directly from their home.

Aims and Objectives: The main aim of this integration is support the chronic patients and their caregivers in the management of their needs not only at clinical level and give to the clinicians, specialists and GPs, and social workers a new tool in order to better follow their patients and allow the continuity of care of these particular patients. The main objectives are improving the quality of life of chronic patients and reduce their need to access at healthcare structures.

Results: In the Veneto Region a unique platform has been developed for delivery of both telecare and telehealth services to chronic patients who are equipped at home with emergency button and portable devices for real time detection of emergencies and for measure their clinical data in agreement with plan of their clinicians. Clinical data are transmitted from patient's home to eHealth regional centre and managed by trained operators. The operators detect the alarm and inform the clinicians when it is necessary. The clinicians can take the proper decision basing on the trends of parameters measured. Telemonitoring integrates telecare service for 24/7 real time detection of emergency situations at the patient's home and makes scheduled control calls to monitor the patient's life conditions and quality of life. The patient is equipped with a personal device he can use to trigger an alarm in case of sudden worsening of symptoms or domestic accident. The distress call is addressed directly to the Regional Centre, where operators manage the situation calling the patient or his caregiver and, if necessary, putting them in contact with the ER department or Social Services. The eHealth operators make also scheduled control calls to check the patient's life conditions and needs.

Nowadays there are 25,000 Venetian citizen followed with telecare and more than 1.100 followed with telehealth and telecare services.

Conclusion: In order to validate the solution and provide the services to all venetian patients that need it, Veneto Region are working on the rigorous assessment of the solution. The assessment is carrying out following the Health Technology Assessment. Although the results that we have today are preliminary and incomplete, they appear to be very encouraging.

Keywords:

chronicity, integration, telemonitoring, telehealth, telecare

Presentation available at: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/third-annual-international-congress-telehealth-and-telecare>