

Global Telehealth 2014

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Preface

e-Health – in its many forms – continues to be implemented throughout the globe, yet sound evidence of its ‘value’ to healthcare systems remains limited, and achieving its successful, sustained integration is a challenge. Telehealth, one component of e-health, also suffers from the same shortcomings, and has not yet reached the necessary tipping point for assuring its universal adoption. Health consultations delivered via videoconferencing, store-and-forward solutions for remote provision of health services, and home monitoring of patients for telecare are examples of some diverse areas of Telehealth that offer gains in quality and efficiency. In contrast, the recent spontaneous growth of mobile healthcare solutions as smartphones become more common amongst healthcare providers, and creation of web-based wellness promotion and health management tools has opened up whole new areas for Telehealth to provide future benefits.

It is becoming crucial that a thorough understanding of global Telehealth activity and opportunity for inter-jurisdictional alignment be developed, in order to allow mutual improvement to be achieved. The developed world can provide interim clinical and educational support as the developing world establishes the necessary capacity to continue to build its own capacity, while the developing world can provide inexpensive and truly innovative solutions to the developed world through reverse innovation. Venues such as Global Telehealth provide a platform for the exchange and development of common understanding of clinical needs and technologically appropriate Telehealth solutions.

Global Telehealth 2014 (GT2014) was the 3rd International Conference in the series, held in conjunction with the ICT4Health Conference 2014 in Durban, South Africa. This year the conference theme was “Integrated, Innovative, Scalable and Sustainable Solutions”, emphasizing the importance of these aspects in achieving wider acceptance and adoption of e-Health and Telehealth. A total of 28 papers were accepted by the international expert reviewer panel for presentation at the event. This book contains selected full papers from those accepted, that align well with the conference theme, and will be informative to those in the global Telehealth community.

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