



Good *e*Consultation

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Recommendations for e-mail based Tele-Health

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1. Background

*e*Consultation is an e-mail based exchange of referrals accompanied by digital images, and is for the purpose of supporting world-wide cooperation on patients between health care professionals.

International Society for Telemedicine (ISfT) has compiled a set of recommendations for the health sector with the view to ensure uniform use of *e*Consultations.

These recommendations include:

- Referrals to specialists
- Accompanying images
- Specialists' replies to photographs and referrals

The "Good *e*Consultation" was originally compiled by MedCom at the Danish Centre for Health Telematics in 2002.

2. Referral

An electronic referral is sent with an image by e-mail. The image is identified by the sender with a surgery identification code, image series number, and an image number.

The referral should contain as much relevant information as possible, with emphasis on the significance of information on medication and medical history.

The information to the specialist is entered in accordance with the guidelines listed below.

- Diagnosis/problem
- Relevant medical history – previous and current, also including information concerning any inherited predisposition, exposure, and time factor.
- Objective findings
- Relevant test results
- Relevant current medication
- Special patient needs
- Wishes and expectations to the specialist.

3. Digital images

Referrals should include images from a distance as well as close-ups. Images from a distance should show distribution on the body, and close-ups representing the morphology; Preferably an image of an individual characteristic element. Close-ups should indicate measurements.

Digital cameras capable of taking JPG images with a resolution of 2 million pixels as a maximum are recommended, as far lower image resolution will often provide images of sufficiently high quality for the recipient.

4. Specialist's reply

The reply from the specialist is sent by e-mail.

The information from the specialist is entered in accordance with the guidelines listed below.

1. Image number
Identified by original sender (surgery identification code, image series number, and image number)
2. Image description
Macro (image from a distance)
Micro (close ups)
Quality (technical inadequacies, possible request for additional images, etc.)
3. Description of clinical diagnosis of images
4. Suggestions for diagnosis (possible diagnosis code) and possible differential diagnostic considerations
5. Suggestions for treatment
Good advice regarding treatment, possible post-treatment care, and check-up intervals
6. Suggestions for medication
Possibly indicate a prescription, product, strength, dosage, indication, length of time, etc.
7. Suggestions regarding possible compensation claims (work accident, side effects of drugs, etc.)
8. Recommended information to the patient
Patient guidelines, possible referral to a home page/health site
9. Suggestions regarding
possible supplementary tests (microscopy, microbiology, clinical chemistry)
check-up, possible supplementary tests (state intervals)