

EAHP 2021 Virtual
The pros and cons of
telepharmacy

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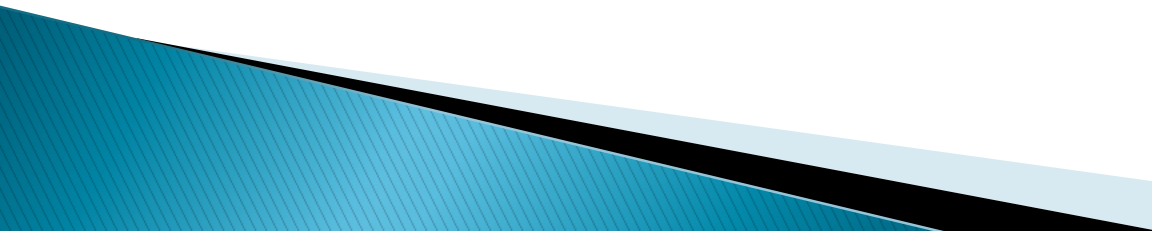
The pros and cons of telepharmacy

- ▶ Conflict of interest: nothing to disclose

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The pros and cons of telepharmacy

3 self-assessment questions

- ▶ 1. Telepharmacy can help in the development of different areas of hospital pharmacy activities? Yes / No
 - ▶ 2. Telepharmacy is well regulated in all UE member states? Yes / No
 - ▶ 3. Telepharmacy can improve the availability of pharmacy services in rural areas? Yes / No
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The pros and cons of telepharmacy

- ▶ Plan of the presentation
 1. Telepharmacy – definition and first steps
 2. Telepharmacy – areas of activity
 3. Drug Information Center – pilot activity in telepharmacy
 4. Telepharmacy and communication issues
 5. Telepharmacy – pros and cons
 6. Three take-home messages
 7. Conclusion

Telepharmacy-definition

- ▶ **Telepharmacy** is defined as, "the provision of pharmaceutical care through the use of telecommunications and information technologies to patients at a distance."

Telepharmacy –definition according to Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

- ▶ „The use of telecommunications technology to facilitate or enable the delivery of high-quality pharmacy services in situations where the patient or healthcare team does not have direct(in person) contact with pharmacy staff”

First steps in telepharmacy

- ▶ A form of telepharmacy has been in use by Australia's Royal Flying doctor Service since 1942. Medical chests containing medications and equipment are placed in remote communities where they can be administered to patients during telehealth consultations.
- ▶ Implementation of telepharmacy in the United States began in the 2000s. In 2001, North Dakota—the first U.S. state to pass regulations allowing retail pharmacies to operate without requiring a pharmacist to be physically present.
- ▶ In June 2003 was started Canada's first telepharmacy service by a hospital in Cranbrook—a hospital pharmacist in Cranbrook began using telepharmacy technology to oversee pharmacy technicians at the other hospital.

Telepharmacy – areas of activity

1. Support to clinical services

- Medication Adherence
- Clinical Pharmacist Shortage
- Pharmaceutical Counselling Activity



Telepharmacy – areas of activity

2. Remote Education and Handling of „Special Pharmacies”

- Medical Staff Training and Patient Education
- Remote Surveillance and Anti-Neoplastic Medication Preparation
- Control of Medicines Costs in Seagoing Vessels



Telepharmacy – areas of activity

3. Drug Therapies checking

- Remote prescription checking
- Medication reconciliation checking

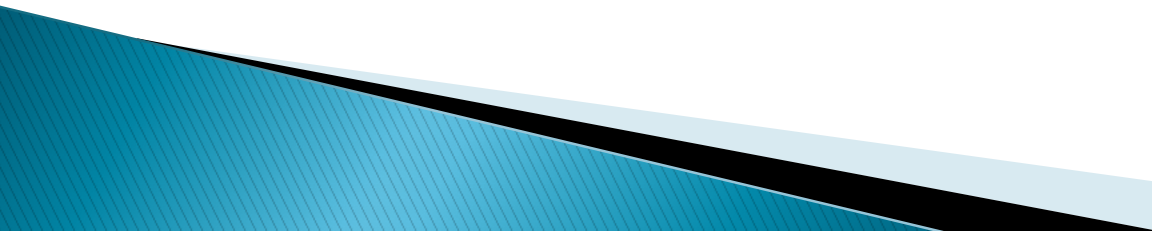


Telepharmacy – Drug Information Center pilot activity

- ▶ **Drug Information Center – Wroclaw (Poland) experience (2008 - 2020)**
 - drug information pharmacist support to hospital pharmacists in Q&A – phone/e-mail/skype
 - drug information pharmacist support to GP – phone/email/skype
 - drug information pharmacist consultations to patients (Q&A, MUR) –phone/skype/e-mail/personal contact
 - drug information pharmacist support to paediatric oncology ward (rare tumors and new treatments, off label use of medicines, clinical trials) e-mail/phone/personal contact

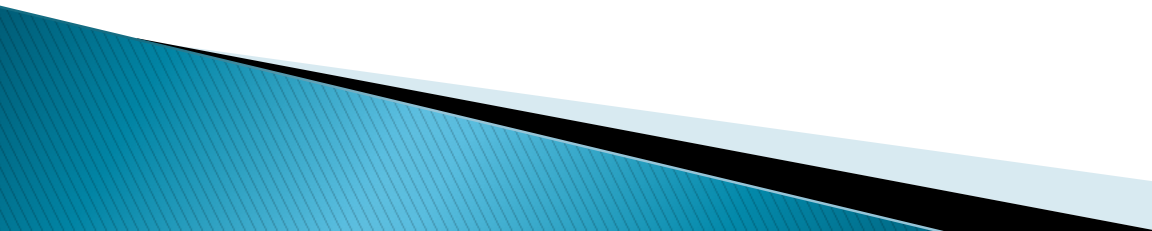


Telepharmacy and communication issues

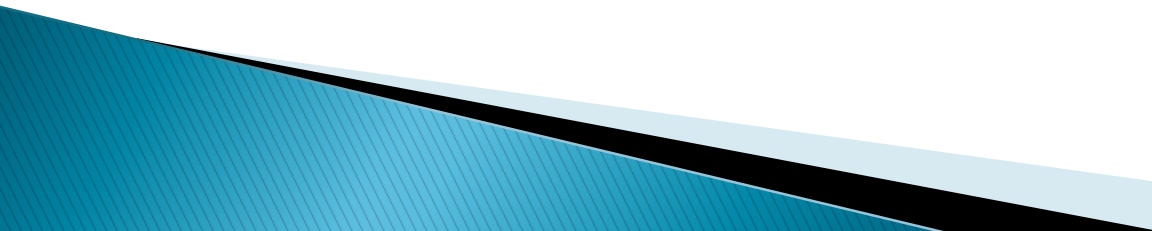
- ▶ There is a need to implement specific trainings in communication for telepharmacy purposes.
 - ▶ The lack of rapid and face-to-face oral communication can be challenging in daily work of pharmacists with medical doctors, nurses and other pharmacists as well as patients.
 - ▶ Coronavirus pandemic have sped up the process of distance communication and teleconsultancy.
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Telepharmacy-pros

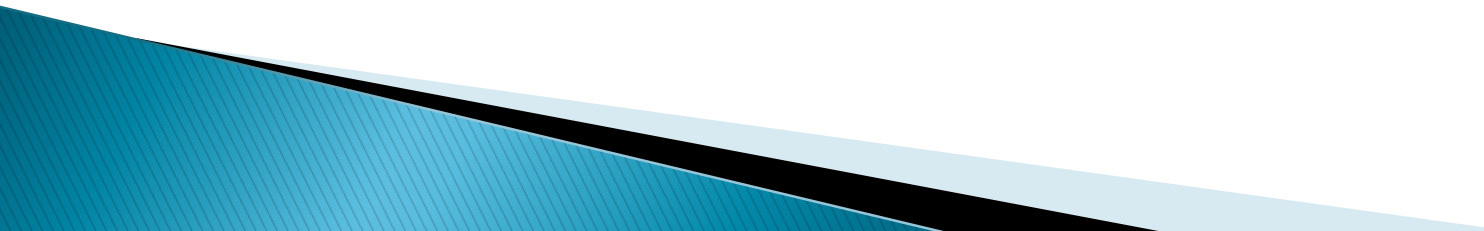
New perspectives in the delivery of pharmacy services in term of:

- ▶ Better availability of pharmacists
 - ▶ Better services for rural area
 - ▶ Flexibility in term of working hours
 - ▶ Possibility to consult patients from different regions/countries
 - ▶ Decrease of medication error rates in hospitals
 - ▶ Cheaper structures than traditional pharmacy
 - ▶ Better access to colleagues in European countries to exchange experience and know how (ex. in medicine – ERN)
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Telepharmacy-cons

- ▶ Lack of uniformity rules between member states
 - ▶ Regulatory issues
 - ▶ Efficient internet connections
 - ▶ Costs of software and devices
 - ▶ Integration of telepharmacy in reimbursement programs of health systems
 - ▶ Protection of data
 - ▶ Scepticism of health professionals and patients
 - ▶ Impact of telepharmacy on patient health (not enough high quality studies published)
 - ▶ Isolation and lack of human direct contact
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Telepharmacy – 3 take-home messages

1. Telepharmacy holds significant promise as a technology to improve access to pharmaceutical care for people (ex. rural areas and remote communities).
 2. Telepharmacy is quickly becoming an integral part of modern pharmacy practice (ex. medication management, dispensing, patient counseling, and drug information).
 3. Inherent to the adoption of these practices are legal challenges and pitfalls that need to be addressed.
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Telepharmacy - conclusion

1. Telepharmacy can bring solutions to the problem of pharmacist shortage
2. Telepharmacy can also contribute to guarantee a proper pharmaceutical assistance in underserved area.
3. A well-developed system, however, can change the practice of pharmacy that is beneficial to both the rural communities and the hospital or retail pharmacies that deliver these services.

But....

There is still a lot of work to do and a lot of good solutions to find to implement telepharmacy in EU

Thank you for you attention
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**“It always seems impossible until it's
done.” Nelson Mandela**

