

2009-04-21 OARNET NEWS: Innovative Care Delivery (Federal Telemedicine News)

Innovative Care Delivery

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The Ohio Telehealth Video Resource Center (TVRC) a not-for-profit center recently launched a web site to make the center's video conferencing services available to physicians and healthcare education professionals worldwide. TVRC serves as an international resource center and video hub of telehealth activities for statewide, national, and international activities. The TVRC site at www.telehealthvrc.org provides video conference hardware and software requirements that has scheduling tools, telehealth news, instructions, and an e-health forum.

"TVRC supports the use of high quality video for health education and training, research, and associated clinical activities," explains Charles R. Doarn, the Center's Executive Director. "Healthcare providers with little technical experience can easily access TVRC resources to communicate via high-quality video conferencing with other health providers."

TVRC clients have the opportunity to share "grand rounds" where doctors can meet to discuss multiple patients, see demonstrations on new and emerging clinical practices, hold multi-center interactions, and conduct clinical trials and other research projects. The Center also provides a technology forum for the continued development of telehealth processes and standards.

Several years ago, Ohio invested in telehealth by advancing a statewide fiber optic network and then piloted telehealth projects at the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), the technology infrastructure arm of the University System of Ohio. OARnet established TVRC an international resource partnering with the World Bank, Internet2, and the Ohio supercomputer Center.

Early telehealth projects included a series of video conferences with U.S. trauma specialists sharing insights with healthcare professionals in Latin America, Africa, and South Asia. Another pilot project involved U.S. surgeons demonstrating orthopedic knee surgery for colleagues in China.

TVRC is empowering change and the video resources are benefiting a wide range of applications in both clinical environments and the classroom. For example, the Nationwide Children's Hospital's eNICU in Columbus Ohio uses high definition video permitting neonatal experts to examine infants at rural and remote locations.

Another innovative project, the International Virtual e-Hospital Foundation (IVeH) is a non-profit organization supported by the Department of State and based in Anchorage Alaska. IVeH was created to help rebuild the medical system in Kosova and other developing countries by implementing telemedicine, telehealth, and virtual educational programs.

Another group the Medical Missions for Children dedicated to serving the medical needs of catastrophically ill children in underserved international areas is using the Global Telemedicine and

Teaching Network to help children in need. The GTTN also broadcasts continuing education programs and supports telemedicine consults among a global network of medical specialists.

Posted by Carolyn Bloch

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