

ATTITUDE TOWARDS TELEMEDICINE - POLISH POPULATION SURVEY

Wojciech Glinkowski^{1,2,3}, Magdalena Sawińska⁴

¹ Chair and Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology of the Locomotor System, Center of Excellence "TeleOrto", Medical University of Warsaw

² Department of Anatomy, Center of Biostructure, Medical University of Warsaw

³ Polish Telemedicine Society

⁴ Department of Healthcare Research, TNS OBOP, Wspólna 56, 00-687 Warszawa, Poland

w.glinkowski@parser.com.pl

Information Technology development leads to new remote medical services offered to the patients. Services based on Internet or mobile telecommunication technology; known as the telemedicine i.e. teleconsultation, telesurgery, telementoring, teleeducation, telerehabilitation or teliagnostics may become an attractive alternative for traditional health care. Patients who complain on difficult access to professional medical care due to various factors may benefit from this comfortable supplement. However, using those modern services is determined by existing telecommunication infrastructure and patient's skills of operating higher technology devices. The aim of the study by TNS OBOP and Polish Telemedicine Society was to survey opinions about telemedicine presented among citizens of Poland. Additionally, authors were interested to survey the needs, willingness, attitude, requirements and concerns toward the new medical phenomenon as the telemedicine.

The aim of his study was also to analyze attitude and the level of literacy in operating modern teleinformatic devices in the context to use it for telemedicine and eHealth applications.

The study was conducted accordingly to OMNIMAS protocol (omnibus type study) using PAPI technique (Paper And Pencil Interview) in respondent's residence.

An operat for lottery-drawing sample was citizen's registry by General Statistics Office (GUS). The age of people included into a study was 15 and older. The population sample was representative for whole inhabitants of Poland. The probe was performed on N=1005 interviews of polish population aged 15 and older divided accordingly to: sex, age, number of inhabitants in domicile, geographical region and education. The topics covered by the survey were: current telemedicine technology knowledge/usage level; general attitude towards telemedicine applications; perceived efficacy of telemedicine in enhancing quality of care; and intention to use telemedicine. The term „telemedicine” carried no associations to 42% of polish citizens. Totally incorrect meaning of telemedicine was represented by 10 % of respondents (telepathy/ parapsychology – 5% or TV program – 5%). Relatively often (21%) telemedicine respondents associated the term to advices given by physicians through the Internet. Knowledge about telemedicine services is merely satisfactory, because 44% of respondents have heard about at least one of service listed and presented to them. Fifty six per cent knows no telemedicine service at all. The most known service is „Information about the access to the specialist and scheduling the visit to the specialist through e.g. internet (25%). Almost one quarter (24%) of respondents think, that no telemedicine service is available in Poland, and 35% have no knowledge about it. General acceptance and willingness to use telemedicine is assumed as relatively low at the level of 46% of respondents. The telemedicine idea is liked by 10% respondents only. Less enthusiastic opinion is expressed by 36 % („rather like”). The limited willingness of telemedicine and actual experience in Poland may be the matter of change in the future due to various initiatives, and successfully studied projects.

Keywords: telemedicine, attitude, survey, residents, Poland