

E-LEARNING AND E-HEALTH EDUCATION AT THE TELEMEDICINE PROGRAM OF KOSOVA: THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST THREE YEARS

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Background: One of the main objectives of the Telemedicine Program of Kosova has been the implementation of e-learning and e-health education programs through electronic library and other activities including scientific conferences, seminars, workshops and live broadcasting of surgical procedures.

The goal was to establish distance education programs that will involve as many health care providers as possible of the University Clinical Centre of Kosova (UCCK) and when possible other regions. These programs would provide access to online medical journals and other literature for the medical community of Kosovo, as well as active participation in structured medical education events.

Methods: We reviewed the results of e-learning and e-health education for the first three years of the Telemedicine Program of Kosova (TCK). All TCK facilities are to a different extent regularly used by medical students, nurses, doctors and other members of the scientific community of UCCK and the Medical Faculty of the University of Prishtina. The most successful unit of the TCK is the e-library, offering more than 1800 online journals, monographs and books and utilized regularly with over 20.000 visits recording as of August 2006. Furthermore 20 Conferences and video conferences, workshops, seminars and live broadcast of surgical procedures were held at the TCK with total number of visitors of 2000.

Conclusion: The e-education programs have been the most successful part of the Telemedicine Program of Kosova. Expanding to the region and offering the same services of e-health education to other regions in Kosova is work in progress. Different strategies are being implemented to this end, including increasing efforts to obtain donor funding, direct contributions by the health care facilities for saving costs through tele-consultations and launching public private partnerships with the increasing number of private health care providers and educational facilities in Kosovo to achieve long term sustainability of all education programs.

Key words: 1. Telemedicine Centre of Kosova, 2. e-education, 3. e-consulting, 4. private public partnership for sustainability