

Telemedicine for the benefit of patient, healthcare systems and society

**Telemedicine works:
it saves lives, improves efficiency and benefits the economy**

Telemedicine can be defined as a delivery of healthcare services through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in a situation where the actors are not at the same location. The actors can either be **two health care professionals** (e.g. teleradiology, telesurgery) or a **health care professional and a patient** (e.g. telemonitoring of chronically ill such as those with diabetes and heart conditions, telepsychiatry, etc).

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Literature and case studies of already-implemented or piloted telemedicine applications, including many EC-funded projects report proven benefits at different levels. For example, disease management through telemonitoring of heart conditions reduces mortality rates by an estimated 20%^[a]. It has also demonstrated the influence on attitudes and behaviour of patients resulting in better clinical outcomes^[b].

Savings estimates due to telemonitoring of patients who would otherwise be kept in hospitals have been shown to range between **30-60% and 40-70% of health professionals' time**.

Market growth of telemedicine systems and services has a major potential for growth. The global market for telemedicine, provided that some of the identified barriers described below are addressed, **could increase from €4.7 billion today to over €11.2 billion by 2012**, an average annual growth rate of 19%^[c]. In the context of an ageing population, increased burden of chronic diseases, active participation of more demanding patients and ever increasing health expenditures, the **realisation and amplification of telemedicine services is important and urgent**.

Bron:
Source:

