eConsult: Improving Clinical Workflows and Access to Specialty Care

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Presenter Disclosure

• **Presenter:** Elizabeth Keller
• **Relationships with commercial interests:**
  • OntarioMD Vice-President

• **Presenter:** Anil Maheshwari, MD
• **Relationships with commercial interests:**
  • OntarioMD Physician Peer Leader
Disclosure of Commercial Support

• No commercial support

• **Potential for conflict(s) of interest:** Dr. Anil Maheshwari is an OntarioMD Peer Leader and receives payment for services rendered to his peers on behalf of OntarioMD.
Ontario eConsult Program

The Ontario eConsult Program has been created to enable timely and equitable access to specialist advice for all patients in Ontario. The program, with the support of the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, integrates two successful initiatives: BASE™ Managed Specialty model and the Ontario Telemedicine Network’s (OTN) Direct to Specialist model.

The program includes four services:

1. Ontario eConsult service
2. Champlain BASE™ regional service
3. Teledermatology
4. Teleophthalmology
Ontario eConsult Program

• Accessed primarily through the secure OTNhub (otnhub.ca), the program is led by the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence (eConsult COE), housed at The Ottawa Hospital in partnership with the Bruyère Research Institute.

• Delivery partners include Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), OntarioMD, and eHealth Ontario, with the support of the Ministry of Health.

• Regional partners include Champlain BASE™, South East Academic Medical Organization, Health Information Technology Services, eHealth Centre of Excellence, Women’s College Hospital, St Joseph’s Care Group in North West Region and TransForm Shared Service Organization.
What is an eConsult?

eConsult is a secure web-based tool that allows physicians or nurse practitioners timely access to specialist advice for all patients and often eliminates the need for an in-person specialist visit.

Clinicians can access specialist advice through two models:

- **BASE™ Managed Specialty** where eConsults are sent to a group of specialists from across the province in a specific specialty and each case is assigned to a specific specialist by a case assigner.
- **Direct to Specialist** where eConsults are sent to individual specialists or groups by searching in a directory.
Numbers at a Glance

Clinicians with Access to eConsult

- **Primary Care Clinicians**: 8087
  - Registered: 1360
  - Active: 339
  - EMR Integrated: 932

- **Specialists**:
  - Cardiology: 5%
  - Gastroenterology: 5%
  - Infectious Diseases: 4%
  - Orthopedic Surgery: 4%
  - Psychiatry: 6%
  - Neurology: 6%
  - Obstetrics and Gynecology: 6%
  - Endocrinology and Metabolism: 7%
  - Hematology: 10%
  - Dermatology: 14%
  - Pediatrics: 3%
  - Nephrology: 3%
  - Rheumatology: 2%
  - Otolaryngology: 2%
  - Respiratory: 2%

*Note: Data current as of September 2019.*
Specialties Available

Addiction Medicine
- General
- Opioid

Allergy & Clinical Immunology
- General & Pediatrics

Anesthesiology

Cardiology
- General & Pediatrics
- Cardiac Surgery
- Electrophysiology
- Inherited Heart Rhythm Disorders
- Pediatrics General Cardiology
- Pediatrics Electrocardiology
- Pediatrics Inherited Heart Rhythm Disorders

Concussion

Dentistry
- Pediatric

Dermatology
- General & Pediatrics

Diabetes

Endocrinology
- General & Pediatrics

Diabetes

Environmental Health

Gastroenterology
- General & Pediatrics

Genetics
- Medical Genetics
- Pediatric Medical Genetics

Geriatrics
- Care of the Elderly
- Frailty Management
- GeriMedRisk
- Medication
- Psychiatry

Gynecology
- General & Pediatrics
- Gynecologic Oncology
- Urogynecology

Hematology
- General & Pediatrics

Hepatology
- General & Pediatrics

HIV
- General
- Psychiatry

Infectious Diseases
- General & Pediatrics

Internal Medicine

Nephrology
- General & Pediatrics

Neurology
- Epilepsy
- Headaches
- General & Pediatrics
- Neuromuscular
- Neuroradiology
- Neurosurgery
- Stroke

Obstetrics

Orthopedics
- General & Pediatrics
- Spinal Surgery

Otolaryngology
- ENT
- Head & Neck Surgery

Pain Medicine

Palliative Care

Pediatrics
- General
- Allergy & Clinical Immunology
- Cardiology
- Dentistry
- Dermatology
- Electrophysiology
- Endocrinology
- Developmental
- Gastroenterology
- Hematology
- Hepatology
- Infectious Diseases
- Inherited Heart Rhythm Disorders
- Neonatal/Perinatal
- Medical Genetics
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Oncology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Psychiatry
- Urology

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Psychiatry
- General (English & French)
- Developmental/Behavioral
- Medically Complex
- Pediatrics
- Perinatal
- Sleep Medicine

Public Health

Psychiatry
- General (English & French)
- Developmental/Behavioral
- Medically Complex
- Pediatrics
- Perinatal
- Sleep Medicine

Respirology
- General
- Sleep Medicine

Rheumatology
- General
- Inflammatory Arthritis
- Osteoporosis

Sleep Medicine
- Psychiatric
- Respirology

Surgery
- General
- Head and Neck
- Neurosurgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Spinal
- Thoracic
- Vascular

Thrombosis

Transgender

Urology
- General & Pediatrics
- Male Fertility/Sexual Medicine
- Oncology
- Urogynecology
Otherwise healthy male had insurance physical. Liver function and cholesterol elevated. Repeat was ordered with further work up. US of liver was negative. This is a young, thin male on a gluten-free diet and eats healthy. Dad has cholesterol issues. He doesn’t do routine exercise. According to Framingham he will need to be on a statin in 5 years. No street drugs, no IV drugs, no tattoos. Doesn’t drink regularly but some binge drinking 2-3 times a month. I was hoping to get advice on what to order next or does he need to see a specialist. Your advice is greatly appreciated.

The enzymes are minimally elevated and may be related to some fatty liver deposit body habitus. They are not a contraindication to lipid lowering therapy. Review all medications and herbal supplements. Would suggest anti-HCV, alpha-1-antitrypsin, ceruloplasmin, ferritin, transferrin saturation, ANA, total IgG, ASMA, AMA as well as an anti-tTG (despite GFD) as sometimes mildly elevated enzymes are related to celiac disease (has he actually been diagnosed)?
Real eConsult Case

**Referrer Question**
Despite complete courses of immunization for MMR vaccine and boosters because she doesn’t build immunity to mumps per lab work, how often do I booster as she states this has been an ongoing issue for her growing up. She is an internal medicine resident. Any suggestions are welcome.

**Specialist Response**
As long as she has had 2 MMR vaccinations separated by 28 days there is no need to do additional MMR vaccine or check titres. Titres are not a reliable indicator of immunity for mumps. This means she may actually have some immunity and also means would not rely on titres for immunity and only acceptable form of immunity is either 2 documented valid doses of MMR or born prior to 1970. in her case she does not require any further vaccinations and nothing more to do. If she were to see a patient with mumps or suspected mumps she should wear appropriate personal protective equipment as a precaution. Thank you for the consult.
Real eConsult Case

Referrer Question
Please comment on whether these back skin lesions need a dermatology referral. These are birthmarks and the patient’s wife states that both are darkening. They do not look suspicious to me but patient and wife want to make sure they are not precancerous/cancerous.

Specialist Response
Nevus and macular amyloidosis. Continue to moisturize skin. Reassess prn if anything changes.
How eConsult Improves Clinical Workflows

Patients
- Care is supported by a program that is fast, efficient, private, safe and cost effective
- All patients receive access to quality specialist advice, wherever they live in Ontario
- Only about one third of eConsults result in patients needing to see a specialist face to face
- Evidence shows patient safety is improved through timely access to specialist advice

Primary Care Clinicians
- Provides timely access to non-urgent questions (average response time is 2 days)
- Access to over 90 specialties and sub-specialties
- Improved care coordination and collaboration between clinicians
- Provides opportunities to enhance learning and manage patient cases at the family practice level, where patient trust is often highest

Specialists
- Allows prompt, high quality communication with requesting providers
- Provides opportunities for knowledge sharing and increased capacity in primary care
- Offers liability protection through the permanent written record of advice provided
- Is an important part of restructuring care to improve equitable access for patients
EMR Integration

- OntarioMD, with support from OTN and eHealth Ontario, has been leading the eConsult EMR Integration workstream on behalf of the Ontario eConsult Program.

- EMR-integrated eConsult, currently available through QHR Technologies’ Accuro® and KAI Innovations’ OSCAR. OntarioMD is currently working with Avaros, YES and YMS on the inclusion of EMR-integrated eConsult in their respective EMR offerings.

- The specification for EMR-integrated eConsult was made available to all OntarioMD certified EMR vendors in April 2019. It defines the requirements for integrating the provincial eConsult functionality into EMR product offerings.
EMR Integration

• The timeline for availability to providers depends on individual EMR vendors incorporating the specifications into their product.

• More than 300 clinicians across Ontario are now using eConsult through their EMRs.

• Use of the EMR-integrated service has more than doubled this year. Clinicians have sent more eConsults through their EMRs in the first six months of 2019 than all of 2018!
Benefits of EMR Integration

90% Of clinicians with access to eConsult through their EMRs agreed it improved their workflows.

90% Of clinicians with access to eConsult through their EMRs agreed using the EMR integrated version motivated them to use it more.

85% Of clinicians with EMR integrated eConsult would recommend the integration to their colleagues.

51% Of cases submitted through eConsult resulted in an avoided referral.

4.7 Total minutes saved by clinicians who submitted an eConsult through their EMRs vs. the web-based solution.

Top Features of EMR Integration

✓ Auto-population of patient demographics
✓ Ability to load attachments directly in the EMR
✓ Automatic documentation within the EMR (patient chart)
EMR-Integrated eConsult
Accessing eConsult through OSCAR EMR

- Login to your EMR using ONE ID
- Launch eConsult through the top navigation bar
- Create eConsult through the patient chart
EMR Integrated eConsult
Creating an eConsult through OSCAR EMR

- Patient demographic information is directly pulled from patient chart and auto populated
- Ability to send an eConsult Direct to Specialist or to Provincial Specialty Groups
- Ability to attach patient documentation (e.g. labs, diagnostic imaging, etc) directly from patient chart
## EMR Integrated eConsult

Managing your eConsults through OSCAR EMR

<table>
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<th>ID</th>
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- View all eConsults sent and their current status
- Ability to amend, cancel, reassign any eConsult sent
- Seamlessly print eConsults
- Filter and create reports by patient and/or clinicians
Clinician Remuneration

• Services which are part of the Ontario eConsult Program are available at no cost to the patient and the provider.
• Remuneration are reimbursed by the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence. Remuneration is paid on a quarterly basis.
• Where applicable, family physicians can bill OHIP for the consult request using the **K738 fee code** (Ontario Schedule of Benefits). A K738 Clarification Guide has been published by the Ontario Medical Association Economics Department to assist physicians in correctly using the code.
• Specialists providing services on eConsult are paid an **hourly rate of $200, pro-rated** based on the length of time it takes to complete an eConsult.
• Dermatologists and Ophthalmologists providing services on eConsult must bill the OHIP U-Codes (U025, U023, U026 and U021), for virtual e-assessment services rendered. Remuneration for services rendered by Dermatologists and Ophthalmologists will not be reimbursed by the eConsult Centre of Excellence and must be billed directly to OHIP.
Sign Up for EMR-Integrated eConsult

Visit the eConsult table at Booth #27 in the Vendor Showcase area to view a demo or to sign up for eConsult today!

Contact support@ontariomd.com for further information or to register at later.
Questions?
THANK YOU!

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