

# E-Consult Coalition News

April 2023

## Upcoming Events

### Join us for this month's Coalition Roundtable: *E-Consult, Patient and Provider Satisfaction*

Our April roundtable will focus on examples of patient and provider engagement satisfaction with e-consult. We will hear examples from active e-consult providers along with the results of a recent patient survey on experience with and understanding of the e-consult process. We welcome new and experienced e-consult providers and staff to join in the conversation.

**April E-Consult Coalition Roundtable PCP & Patient Experience**

**4/19, 12-1 PT**

[Register here](#)



### April is Earth Month: *E-Consult, Telehealth and Reduction in Travel*

As California patients and providers face high gas prices and weather challenges that impact our ability to travel, we are becoming more aware of the benefits and conveniences of telehealth. E-consult has become a standard component of organizations' telehealth programs, and its impact can now be measured in terms of travel cost savings and carbon footprint reduction.

### Telehealth cuts health care's carbon footprint and patient's costs during pandemic

UC Davis and four other University of California health care systems and doctors used telehealth to serve their patients and tracked this data over the first two years of the pandemic. The video visits that took place saved substantial time, carbon emissions, and transportation costs. These savings included eliminating the need to commute 53,664,391 miles – that's 113 round trips from Earth to the moon. Telehealth also saved an estimated 204 years of travel time, \$33,540,244 travel-related costs, and 42.4 injuries. Researchers also estimated these visits reduced greenhouse gas emissions due to fewer vehicle trips. They found the CO<sub>2</sub> emission savings alone were close to 21,466 metric tons over the two years. This is equivalent to a year's worth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the electricity use of 4,177 U.S. homes. Overall, the carbon footprint of telehealth visits was 6-10 times lower than in-person visits. The potential of telehealth providing both economic and environmental benefits is proving to be an important part of the healthcare system, even after the pandemic.

"Being one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, the health care industry should be taking serious steps to decrease its carbon footprint and telehealth is one of them" - Sristi Sharma M.D., M.P.H.



### What are the cost savings associated with providing access to specialist care through the Champlain BASE eConsult service? A costing evaluation

A study at the University of Ottawa highlights the potential cost savings from eConsultations as patients avoided the travel costs and lost wages/productivity associated with face-to-face specialist visits. A total of 3487 eConsults were completed during the study period. In 40% of eConsults, a face-to-face specialist visit was originally contemplated but avoided as result of eConsult. In 3% of eConsults, a face-to-face specialist visit was not originally contemplated but was prompted as a result of the eConsult. From the societal perspective, total costs were estimated at \$207 787 and total potential savings were \$246 516. eConsult led to a net societal saving of \$38 729 or \$11 per eConsult.

## E-Consult and Telehealth Policy

Our coalition works closely with the California Telehealth Policy Coalition (CTPC) to improve e-consult coverage and provider reimbursement. Although we have made great strides in achieving policy support for e-consult in California, work remains to ensure provider time and payer efforts to support e-consult are acknowledged. Join us for the upcoming sessions below to discuss e-consult coverage and related administrative, legislative, and budgetary updates. The CTPC Legislation Committee meets on the second Thursday of the month at 1pm PT.

**California Telehealth Policy Coalition April Meeting - 4/21, 1-2 PT**

[Join Zoom Meeting here](#)



## E-Consult Resources

Visit [econsultworkgroup.com](http://econsultworkgroup.com) for recent publications, policy updates, and educational

materials. Contact us at [econsultworkgroup@bluepathhealth.com](mailto:econsultworkgroup@bluepathhealth.com).

The E-Consult Coalition Website and News are authored and maintained by [BluePath Health](#).