

Volume 13, 06 November 2013

Publisher: Igitur publishing

URL: <http://www.ijic.org>

Cite this as: Int J Integr Care 2013; EFPC Conf Suppl; [URN:NBN:NL:UI:10-1-114906](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:nl:ui:10-1-114906)

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Conference Abstract

## Tele-consultations tool to decrease professional isolation and to integrate Primary and specialist care

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### Abstract

**Purpose and context:** Currently, Latvia is facing the following challenges in health care: overcoming the demographic change, unequal care, especially in rural areas, support for chronic patients in home environment. The implementation of the Baltic Sea Region project PrimCareIT (Counteracting brain drain and professional isolation of health professionals in remote primary health care through tele-consultation and tele-mentoring to strengthen social conditions in remote regions) is an attempt to raise attractiveness of remote primary health care for medical professionals by the means of tele-consultation. There is evidence that professional isolation is a leading cause for brain drain in rural areas. At present the, Primary care and specialist care services are separated, but in situations when GP by using ICT solutions can get advice from specialists by tele-consultations they become more integrated and GP becomes the key person for patient even for specialist consultations.

**State of the art:** The first results of introduction of tele-consultations in Latvia demonstrate the future of tele-consultation in Primary care.

Statements for debate: Implementation of tele-consultations in primary care increase the accessibility to specialist care (patient has not to travel to region Centre for specialist consultation, reduction of waiting time), saving financial resources (travel costs for patient, tele-consultations are less expensive compare with visits), increase the professionalism of GP and quality of care.

### Keywords:

**tele-consultations, integration of primary and specialist care.**

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**Presentation** available at: <http://www.euprimarycare.nl/istanbul/conference-programme-efpc-2013-istanbul-results>