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Poster abstract

## @ Health: an excellence application in telemedicine

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** The paper presents the experience of the Verbano-Cusio-Ossola (VCO) Local Health Authority, a provider of healthcare services located in the Piedmont Region, Italy. The VCO LHA has designed an innovative telemedicine business model for four different categories of patient, affected by heart disease, diabetes, COPD and terminal cancer.

**Aims and objectives:** The overall project aims to enlist 300 patients in three years (150 in the first year alone). The technological solution of the delivery platform is based on an innovative web-based application developed by TeSAN and integrated with the LHAs information system, a suite of medical devices especially designed for remote services and located in the home and a module for IP video communication. The key feature of the project is that each category of patient is put into one standard service model, i.e. is differentiated according to specific clinical protocols defined by VCO LHA specialists.

**Results and conclusions:** Since 1st July 2009 we have assisted 166 patients, including 114 patients affected by diabetes. After one year 76% of diabetes patients achieved a lower level of Glycated hemoglobin (HbA<sub>1c</sub>, used primarily to identify the average plasma glucose concentration over prolonged periods of time), 54.4% of diabetes patients achieved a lower total cholesterol level and 53.9% a lower triglyceride level. Mean HbA<sub>1c</sub> was initially 8.2%, falling to 7.5% after one year. In one year we saved 288 total accesses to the diabetes clinic. With its various features, the project probably represents one of the most challenging current telemedicine experiences in the Piedmont Region and Italy. As a consequence, assessment of the model will be a crucial activity to support further diffusion of telemedicine initiatives at the level of the Piedmont Regional Health Service.

The project was selected as an innovation for Expo Shanghai 2010 by Italian Ministry of Public Administration and Innovation.

## Keywords

**telemedicine, telehealth, homecare, heart disease, diabetes, COPD**