

Timely Care, Better Communication

Exploring specialist perspectives on Ontario eConsult services

Electronic consultations (**eConsults**) improve access to specialist advice for patients by facilitating electronic communication between providers (physicians and nurse practitioners) and specialists

175 specialists in Ontario using the **eConsultBASE™** (Building Access to Specialists through eConsultation) and Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) services were surveyed in 2017 about their experience with eConsult

Most specialists agreed that eConsult is feasible, results in improved communication between providers, and can be integrated into their clinical workflow without difficulty.

“An excellent service overall. I understand how tough it can be as a PCP to deal with [...] timeliness of consults or even the need for a consult. This fills that gap.”

Specialists were motivated to use eConsult because it...



Provides innovative patient care



Reduces wait times



Improves specialist communication with primary care providers

“This modality of health care delivery is likely more cost-effective by decreasing travel time and time away from work for patients...”

Specialists agreed...



eConsult is a **feasible** way to improve access to specialists care



eConsults are an effective way to provide **continued education** for providers



eConsult results in **improved communication** with providers



they were **appropriately compensated** for answering eConsults

Specialists have commented that participation in eConsult prompts them to **stay up to date with their cases** and have called the service **"fun and rewarding"**



The purpose of this study was to explore specialists' perspectives about eConsult and their experiences with the services. 175 specialists across Ontario, who had completed at least one eConsult on either the OTN or BASE™ service, completed a 34-item web questionnaire in 2017.



There was a 66% response rate from specialists on BASE™ and a 47% response rate from specialists on OTN. 114 specialists on the BASE™ platform, representing 44 specialty groups, and 61 specialists on the OTN platform, representing 26 specialty groups, responded.

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Reference: Keely, E., Williams, R., Epstein, G., Afkham, A., & Liddy, C. (2018). Specialist Perspectives on Ontario Electronic Consultation Services. *Telemedicine and e-Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1089/tmj.2018.0012>.

