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Teledermatology: application of new technologies in primary care

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Background & Aim: In dermatology, the diagnosis and the decision-making process is always based on the clinical information of the anamnesis of the patient and on the morphological description of the skin lesion. Many times, working as a team with the dermatologist may allow a quick and efficient resolution of the lesions.

Using new technologies can provide us a better accessibility to the specialist and help us to solve more cases from the primary care where there are a lot of factors that can make the access to the specialist difficult (hospital in another city, long waiting lists...)

In our primary care center, we have decided to implement a teledermatology circuit. Our objectives are: To improve the diagnosis and clinical decisions in primary care, the accessibility of our patients to a reliable diagnosis, to get an early diagnosis of the suspicious lesions of malignancy, to reduce unnecessary travels and to decrease the long waiting lists.

Method: We use a deferred teledermatology method. The General Practitioner (GP) takes a picture of the lesion (with camera and dermatoscope). The GP uploads the picture and the clinical information into a form and they are sent to the reference dermatologist. The dermatologist writes a little report with the diagnosis or the treatment and he sends it back to the GP.

The image is added into the patient's documents and it can be useful to monitorise the lesion.

Results: One year after the beginning of the circuit, we will make a review of the interconsults done and the results obtained.

Conclusions: To implant a circuit of teledermatology can be interesting to improve the accessibility of the patients to a clinical diagnosis and to the appropriate treatment. This circuit can decrease the waiting list to the specialist and avoid unnecessary travels to the hospital.