

France - Remote Wound Care Pilot in Caen

From September 2010, a regional network of skin wound telecare will operate in Caen, Normandy, France. The plan is part of the government's drive for hospital reform and the telecare system will eventually be extended to more French cities. The brainchild of Dr. Dompmartin from the dermatology unit of the Caen University Hospital and Dr. Blanchere, head of the telemedicine network, the initiative will enable the patient to receive wound care at home. The first set of volunteers will be patients with chronic wounds such as leg ulcers and bedsores.

About twenty freelance nurses wishing to participate will be trained and provided with the transmission material (imaging and sound). "They will take care of 10 patients each. Thanks to a 3G mobile phone equipped with specific software, they will film the wounds to be treated." The remote consultation will take place over the Internet with an expert nurse holding a university degree in wound care management. The expert nurses will have their decisions validated every week by a dermatology specialist, and a video conference will be held once a week.

The freelance nurses will visit the patients staying at home. They will film the wounds and convey the film to the expert nurses to obtain their opinion. The reports and prescriptions aimed at the patients' general practitioners will be channelled through a secure messaging tool named 'Apicrypt'.

The motive behind the network is to not only to facilitate the return home of the patients and thus to cut costs, but also to combat doctor and nurse shortages.

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