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Norway

It has been nearly ten years since GPs in Northern Norway first integrated telemedicine, making it possible to send referrals and receive discharge summaries electronically. Over the next three years this will be expanded with nursing and care services in all municipalities located in the northern region communicating electronically with GPs and health authorities.

Electronic message exchange (EME) will become the de facto way of communicating in the health services. Traditional mail and the telephone will be replaced by electronic means: Referrals, discharge summaries, laboratory results, discharge notes, queries and replies, among others, will all be sent using a secure email system. The interaction reform scheduled to enter into force in January 2012 is increasing the pressure on local authorities to introduce EME.

The Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine (NST) has been dealing with telemedicine and e-health issues via the FUNNKe project, and has faced particular challenges related to financing activities in the municipalities. Over the next three years, FUNNKe will provide municipalities throughout the northern region free access to expertise and support for anchoring and motivation within municipalities; startup knowledge; technical expertise in EME; EMR and training methods, and access to professional networks.

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