

Brazilian Council of Telemedicine and Telehealth – CBTms

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Abstract

The Brazilian Council of Telemedicine and Telehealth is a private nonprofit organization and promotes the development of telemedicine and telehealth in Brazil since its founding in 2002. The article makes brief account of CBTms history, their actions and perspectives and presents the expectations the VII Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth.

Keywords: *Telemedicine, Telehealth.*

Resumen

Consejo Brasileño de Telemedicina y Telesalud

El Consejo Brasileño de Telemedicina y Telesalud es una organización privada sin fines de lucro y promueve el desarrollo de la telemedicina y la telesalud en Brasil desde su fundación en 2002. El artículo hace breve reseña de la historia CBTms, sus acciones y sus perspectivas y presenta las expectativas el VII Congreso brasileño de Telemedicina y Telesalud.

Palabras-clave: *Telemedicina, Telesalud.*

Resumo

Conselho Brasileiro de Telemedicina e Telessaúde (CBTms)

O Conselho Brasileiro de Telemedicina e Telessaúde é uma organização privada sem fins lucrativos e promove o desenvolvimento da telemedicina e telessaúde no Brasil desde sua fundação em 2002. O artigo faz breve relato do histórico do CBTms, suas ações e perspectivas e apresenta as expectativas em relação ao VII Congresso Brasileiro de Telemedicina e Telessaúde.

Palavras-chave: *Telemedicina, Telessaúde.*

Brazil, with 8,514,876 square kilometers and a population of approximately 203 million inhabitants, is a country of continental dimensions, with high environmental, social and cultural diversity. While in the north and northeast dominated regions with low population density, low HDI (Human Development Index) and difficult to access, there are regions in the south and east whose social indicators are similar to those of developed countries.

Within this context ehealth emerges as a fundamental tool to promote the integrity and equity in health issues.

The Brazilian Council of Telemedicine and Telehealth (CBTms) is a private and nonprofit organization. Since its founding in 2002, CBTms has been promoting the development of Telemedicine and Telehealth in Brazil.

The CBTms objectives are:

- assembling doctors, health professionals and others, as well as entities and organizations of any legal nature, who are interested in Telemedicine and Telehealth;
- propose, analyze, stimulate technical standards, as well as ethical proficiency in telemedicine and telehealth, in accordance with the bodies of law to facilitate and improve the practice of telemedicine and telehealth in Brazil;
- promote and encourage research, studies and courses in telemedicine and telehealth, as well as continuing education programs for all types of health professionals;
- collaborate with public authorities and private entities in the implementation, maintenance and development of good practices in telemedicine and telehealth;
- promote scientific activities and joint actions with national and international institutions or government agencies to promote and improve healthcare universal coverage.

The insertion of CBTms in national and international scientific communities has been achieved through the biannual promotion of scientific conferences, as follows:

- **2003 – São Paulo, SP:** I Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth;
- **2005 – São Paulo, SP:** II Brazilian and International Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth in partnership with ISfTeH;
- **2007 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ:** III Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth;
- **2009 – Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais:** IV Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth and II Workshop of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth – Latin America and Europe;

- **2011 – Manaus, Amazonas:** V Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth;
- **2013 – São Paulo, SP:** VI – Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth.

As CBTms does not have a police to getting its own budget, the resources spent on all conferences until now, has been obtained from the registration fees and from financial support of authorities in the different levels of the Public Health Administration. It is noteworthy that in the last four conferences there has been a significant participation of the Ministry of Health leaders and other ministries.

In all opportunities the use of telemedicine and telehealth in the National Public Health System in Brazil has been widely discussed. Furthermore, the conferences have been a permanent forum to exchange experiences with the international community. As a matter of fact, the international community has been exalting the Brazilian Telehealth Network, as the largest telehealth program worldwide.

For all these motives the members of the board of CBTms are sure that the VII Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth: Telehealth for Universal Coverage and 20th ISfTeH International Conference in partnership with the International Society for Telemedicine and Telehealth will be a success.

We see an excellent opportunity to insert definitively the Brazilian Telemedicine and Telehealth Network in the international scenario. Furthermore, when it comes to e-Health, to discuss technological solutions to improve the quality and universal coverage is by far one of the main problems especially in developing countries like Brazil.

The VII Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth will occur in a very strategic moment for the development of telehealth in Brazil. Since 2007, Brazil has begun the development of a telehealth national program in which nine university centers structured telehealth services to offer video conferencing training, distance learning courses and teleconsultations for health system professionals in more than 900 Brazilian municipalities, reaching 2,700 Family Health Teams.

This large pilot project was successful and in 2011 the Ministry of Health chooses to expand the national telehealth project to 16,800 Family Health Teams (about 50%) of existing primary care teams, with the structuring of over 43 telehealth centers with a distinctive feature of the pilot. In these new centers, the purpose was to institutionalize the telehealth actions in the context of the public health, encouraging the services to also offer teleconsultations with

support of universities. This process is being finalized, with the most of the centers already in regular operation.

So, eight years after it has started, Brazil already has a National Telehealth Program that offers assistencial support to half of primary care teams in the country in all 28 Brazilian states and for the majority of municipalities.

Brazil already has enough experience to use the VII Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth to reflect on their experience and take further steps towards the consolidation of national telehealth experience. The presence of several partners from Europe – particularly “The International Society for telehealth & ehealth (ISfTeH)”, the United States and Latin America will allow an exchange of experiences in the telehealth area.

The next steps that Brazil are going to ride in the telehealth area are in the further development of actions already developed and expansion of the few public experiences in remote diagnostics area: teleEKG, tele-retinography, tele-spirometry. Sharing experiences with other partners, reflecting on how to consolidate the telehealth actions in the country and moving forward, it is what is expected from this Congress.

It is also important that the organizational structures of civil society are consolidated. CBTMs expects to make a leap forward its consolidation process in the coming years, in addition to the improvement of its congress which is held every two years.

We are doing an agenda to approach us to the groups that actually make telehealth in Brazil, so that they know the CBTMs that we may also disclose its actions, at which time are also registered new members, aiming at forming a broad database of people who work with telehealth in the country.

In addition, for the next period, it will be expected the development of two very strategic actions, able to give some organicity to the actions of CBTMs outside the congress agenda: it is the construction of comparative development models of telehealth at the municipal and state levels.

This experience has already occurred in national projects in Latin America – with amazing results – with the construction of a comparative model of development with the following components: standards and infrastructure; telehealth training and certification model; strategy for establishing research and academic networks; strategy for promoting, preventing and offering services through telehealth and also regional guidelines for telehealth management.

It is expected that in conjunction with CONASS – Conselho Nacional dos Secretários de Saúde (in portuguese) and CONASEMS – Conselho Nacional de Secretarias Municipais de Saúde (in Portuguese) we can organize ourselves through CBTMs with the creation of technical chambers that will enable the structuring of two working groups which will lead the construction of a comparative model of development of telehealth actions under the municipalities and States. Thus, we will be organizing ourselves and contributing to the development of telehealth in Brazil.

In this effort, we also expect to have the presence of our European partners from ISfTeH and from several Latin American countries that contributed to the formulation and implementation of the model.

Therefore, we entered the VII Brazilian Congress of Telemedicine and Telehealth with many expectations for the consolidation of telehealth actions in Brazil, with a fraternal dialogue with our international partners.