

II Workshop of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth

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Once again the City of Belo Horizonte held another international meeting of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth with the participation of several Latin American and European countries. The II Workshop of the Laboratory was held on the first day of the IV Brazilian Conference of Telehealth and Telemedicine on December 9th 2009.

The proposal of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth is to build a permanent forum for exchanging experiences on telehealth among the member countries and those invited to participate, in addition to encourage the process of action development on telehealth in Latin America. The coordination was located at the Medical School of the Federal University of Minas Gerais in association with the City Health Department of Belo Horizonte. In addition to Brazil, the following countries were present at the Workshop: Spain, Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, Argentina, Cuba, Colombia, Italy, Bolivia, The Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Germany, England, Nicaragua, Poland, Paraguay, Honduras, France and Ecuador. The lab structure was established during the first initiatives of the @lis project sponsored by the European Community in Latin America. Later, other initiatives of the European community contributed to the development of the lab.

On December 2006, the I Workshop of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth was held with the participation of 20 different countries with some experience and actions on telehealth. In this conference, participants discussed topics such as the organization and operational process of the lab as well as an assessment on the several experiences that are using telehealth services in promoting primary healthcare. The following actions were established:

- To enable the exchange of practices, results and services;
- To encourage the structuring of telehealth national policies;
- To promote innovation on telehealth.

In addition to this, the following actions related to supporting national experiences were discussed:

- Sharing of technologies;

- Identification of successful experiences and replication possibilities of models that had been already implemented;
- Implementation methodologies;
- System availability;
- Availability of structured content;
- Contribution to the structure of networks in Latin America.

In this second Workshop it was possible to present the first results reached with the structuring of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth:

- **Latin American Journal of Telehealth:** It was the result of a partnership between the Laboratory and international institutions, the scientific journal was launched in 2009 with the goal of publishing technical and scientific papers on telehealth by authors from different countries. After two years of structuring, this product is increasingly consolidated as an important tool for exchanging experiences and for disseminating knowledge on telehealth.
- **Distance Learning Courses on Telehealth – being organized a the moment:** With large interaction capability, these short-term courses are being organized in order to train professionals of the telehealth area.
- **International videoconferences on primary healthcare:** With videoconferencing resources it was possible to hold meetings and to present success cases on telehealth to different places across the planet. A classroom virtual system with voice, video, data, graph resources on a structured environment for group learning.
- **A telehealth project was organized involving countries from Latin America - Telehealth Regional Guides in Latin America.** The proposal was organized and presented to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) that will finance it. The Coordination of the Laboratory is a member of the organization of this project with the Federal University of Minas Gerais, the Brazilian Ministry of Health, RUTE, the

University of São Paulo (USP) and nine telehealth centers that form the National Telehealth Project in Brazil.

Finally, during the II Workshop of the Laboratory of Excellence and Innovation of Telehealth the formulation and implementation of a telehealth project for the Amazon region with the cooperation of several countries was discussed as a main proposal. The proposals for establishing a Telehealth Network for the Amazon Region are as follows: using the projects for telehealth courses, confirming

the need for efforts to make them feasible, the presentation of proposals to the financing entities, raising awareness towards the needs of this region and to use specific implementation experiences and to encourage the building of a cooperation project involving all participating countries. Finally, all European and Latin American countries showed great commitment to cooperate on the development of the Amazon region. The Laboratory coordination for the next two years was transferred to the University of São Paulo.