

Economic Efficiency of Modern Telemedicine

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It should be noted that the basis for the development of telemedicine throughout the world is the understanding of economic efficiency of information technologies for cutting the costs associated with adequate treatment of each patient.

Our research has shown that tele-consultations centres are economically feasible. The main result of the research was the fact that telemedicine consultations centres in small cities are a good return on small investments. For the local population such a centre provides an access to the world leading specialists, while the expenses of the individuals needing such consultations are significantly lower than the ones they have to incur for traveling to a clinic [1].

Calculations show that it is practical to make small-scale investment into the teleconsultations centre to be able to provide an instant access to a medical centre known for its success in diagnostics and treatment of the relevant diseases. Insurance companies also support new medical technologies, because investments in teleconsultations centres help cut the costs of patients transportation to the consultations centres and back.

The task is to identify the segment of this market, where overseas clinics will find it difficult to compete with the Russian service providers. It is important, because the data indicate that many well-known medical centres of the USA and EC are striving to obtain leading positions in the actively developing international telemedicine market.

Using the SWOT analysis we can see that the most powerful factors favoring successful operations of the Russian telemedicine centres are as follows:

- Thousands of graduates from Soviet medical universities who live abroad and who will find that getting consultations from their professors is cheaper and easier, because they belong to one and the same school;

- Clinics built with the Russian assistance in the developing countries. These clinics used to have very close contacts with Russian medical centres, and for them it will be more efficient to reinstate old ties on a new basis, then to develop new ties with the Western clinics;
- Also, elements of information infrastructure using the Russian-built equipment, working on the basis of the Russian standards, and operated by the local experts who were trained in Russia [1-2].

A positive role can be played by the government support, even if it is only moral one. Throughout the world the top government officials, including ministers, are busy looking for the ways to promote national products into the world markets.

We need to pay very close attention to providing telemedicine services to our compatriots living abroad: large groups of Russian-speaking people are formed in the USA, Canada, Germany, and Israel. Older people in these groups are potential clients of the Russian telemedicine: they have no language barrier, they are accustomed to communicating with the Russian doctors, and the costs, including payment for international traffic, are lower.

References

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