



Excessive wait times pose a significant barrier to care. With many patients waiting months for specialist appointments, this often causes unnecessary anxiety, delays in diagnosis, and potential further deterioration of their conditions. In order to address the issue of excessive wait times, many technological solutions have been proposed and implemented over the past years.

We encourage you to learn more about this newly available electronic consultation service in New Brunswick which is integrated within the EHR and eHealthNB.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
eConsult@gnb.ca

Did you know?

- Falls are the leading cause of injuries amongst seniors in New Brunswick
- Each day in New Brunswick there is about 8 fall-related hospital admissions.
- The average length of stay in hospital due to a fall in seniors is 23 days.

For more information about fall prevention, please visit:



ELECTRONIC CONSULTATION



Enhancing Primary Care
Access to Specialist Consult



Obtaining support to help
reduce seniors' risk of fall

What is eConsult?

eConsult is an electronic communication between a physician and a specialist. An eConsult occurs when a family physician sends a patient specific, non-urgent request for advice to a specialist on a secure web-based platform (eHealthNB). eConsult provides advice to the family physician, who continues to manage the patient's care. It may result in a patient not needing a face-to-face consult with the specialist. If a face-to-face consult is required, the referral for this consultation would proceed in the usual manner that is followed in your area.

Where else has eConsult successfully been done?

eConsult services have been in place in Ontario through the Champlain BASE eConsult service since 2010 and has responded to over 30,000 queries. Data collection from BASE has demonstrated over 8,000 referrals for face to face appointments have been avoided by using eConsult.

For more information about the Champlain BASE eConsult service, please visit www.champlainbaseconsult.com

How does it work?

The family physician accesses the EHR, creates an eConsult request, describes the question, attaches any pertinent documents and submits the request electronically. The eConsult is then assigned to the consulting specialist.

The specialist completes the consult, and sends the response back to the family physician. The family physician can read and download or print the response to the eConsult in a PDF format so that it can be included in the patient's medical record.

Physicians may sign up for notifications within the EHR, which will generate an email alerting them that there is an eConsult requiring their attention (i.e. when assigned to the specialist, or when the response is back to the physician).

The eConsult will remain on the electronic health record (eHealthNB) as part of the patient's record for 30 years. For the time being, the eConsult is only visible to the referring family physician and the specialist who responded to it.

What specialties are currently available through eConsult?

Family physicians can obtain support for the assessment and management of fall risks in older patients from specialties such as:

- **Geriatric Medicine**
- **Neurology**
- **Chronic Pain Management**

Other specialties that can be accessed through eConsult include: Dermatology, Obstetrics & Gynecology; Psychiatry and Orthopedic Surgery. New specialties are being added, so for an up-to-date list, please consult the EHR.

What liability issues are associated with eConsult?

The Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) has assessed the eConsult flow of care and determined that it provides an opportunity to improve efficiency, enhance patient care, expand access to specialists and provides a clear audit trail of the specialist's advice given to the family physician for the suggested care of the patient. Physicians are encouraged to contact CMPA with any specific liability concerns they may have.

For more information about the Canadian Medical Protective Association's position on eConsultation services, please visit www.cmpa-acpm.ca.

How do I use eConsult?

All family physicians currently using the EHR have access to eConsult and are encouraged to use it. A quick reference guide for eConsult can also be found on the homepage of the health portal for your convenience. For more information about eConsult, please contact Karla Faig and Emma Boulay at: eConsult@gnb.ca.