

Matching Policy to Innovation: The Champlain BASE eConsult Service

2016 eHealth Conference, June 7

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Disclosure of Commercial Support

This program has not received financial support from commercial interests.

Potential for conflict(s) of interest: none



The eConsult Team

A collaboration between:

- The Champlain Local Health Integration Network
- The Ottawa Hospital
- Bruyère Research Institute
- Winchester District Memorial



Ontario

Champlain Local Health
Integration Network
Réseau local d'intégration
des services de santé
de Champlain



Winchester
District
Memorial
Hospital



Service Funding

- Champlain Local Health Integration Network
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care

Current Research Funding

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Bruyère Research Institute



CIHR IRSC



Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

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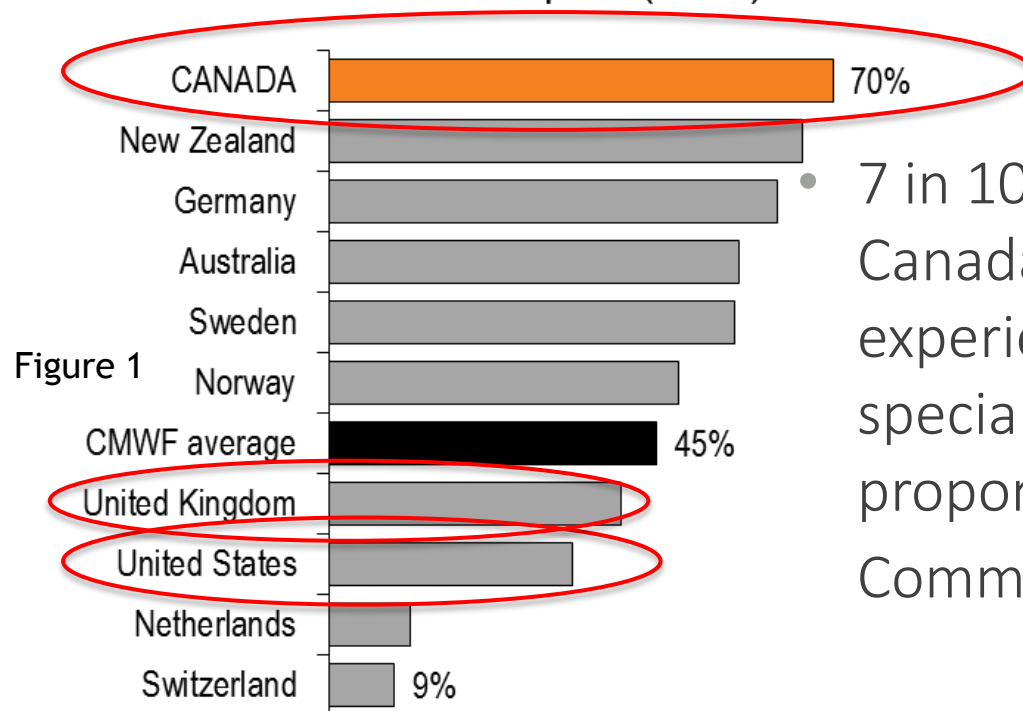
Overview

- Problems in accessing specialist care in Ontario
- Champlain BASE eConsult service overview
- Policies influencing eConsult uptake
- Next steps

Access to Specialists Across Canada

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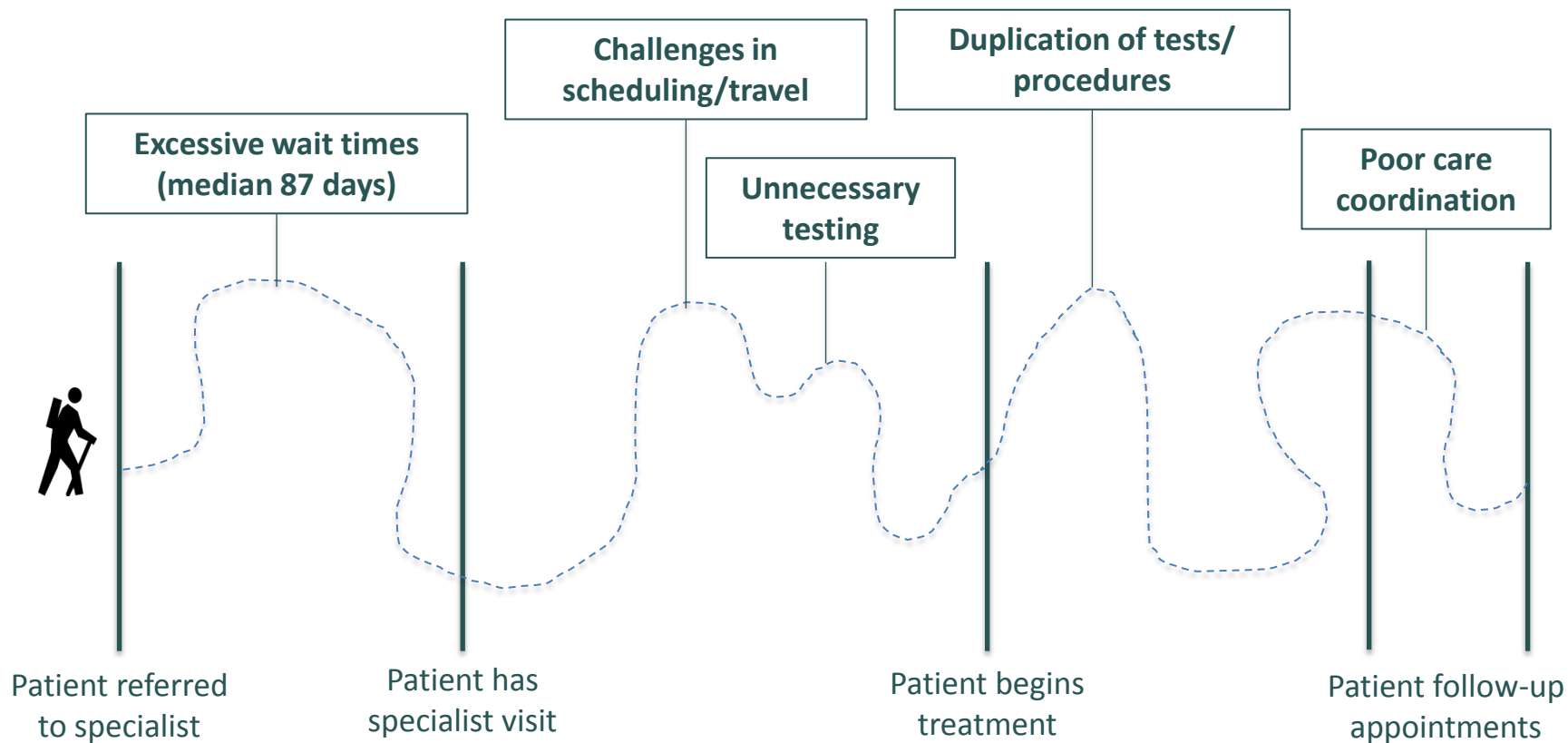
How does Canada compare (2015)?



- 7 in 10 primary care doctors in Canada say their patients often experience long wait times to see a specialist (Figure 1), the highest proportion of all 10 countries in the Commonwealth Fund 2015 Survey.

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Barriers to Access



Champlain BASE* eConsult service improves access to specialist care²

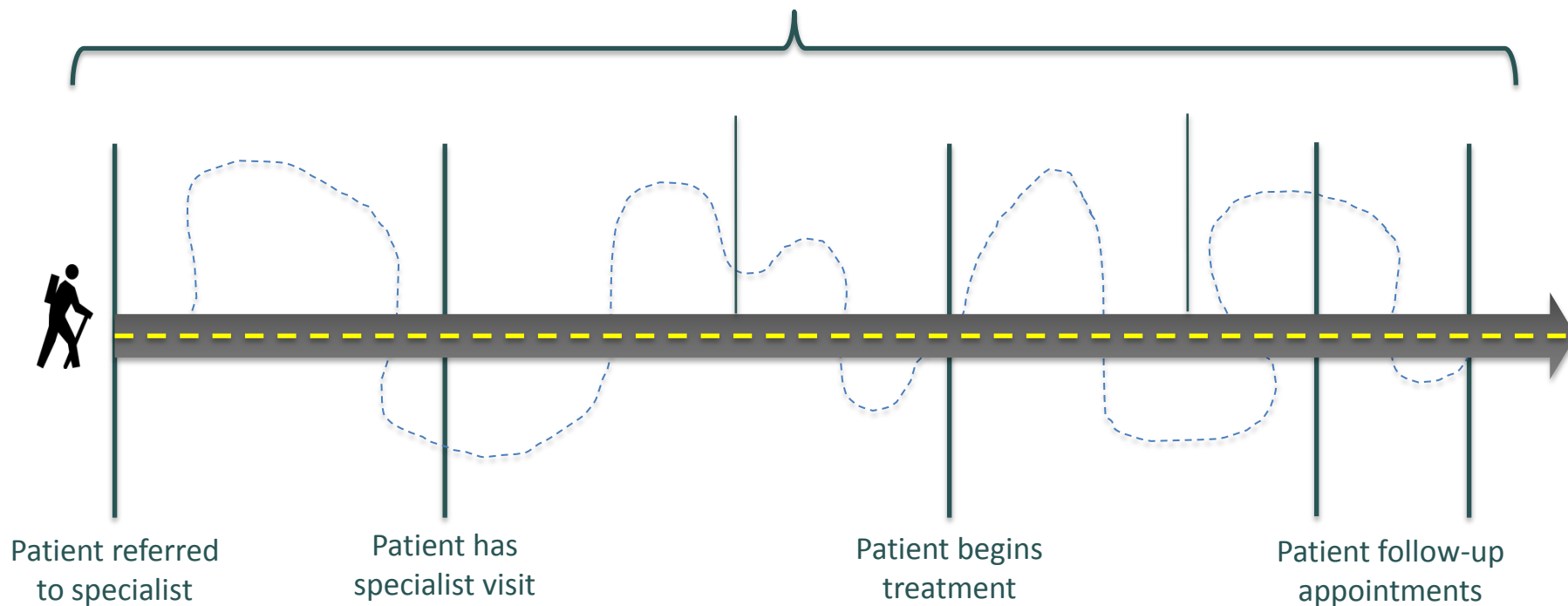
- A secure web-based service for primary care providers to access specialist care for their patients



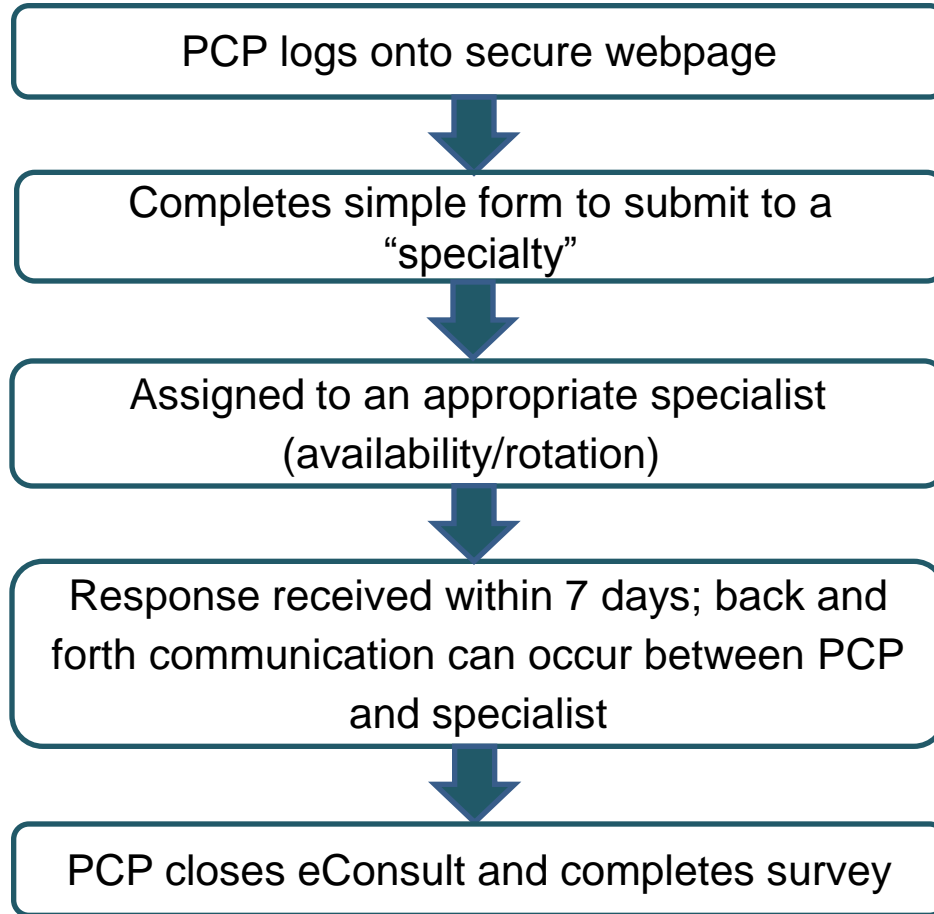
*I LOVE eConsult!!!!
Great way to get fast
information on your
patients and often to
avoid referral if not
indicated.”*

A Solution: eConsult

Champlain BASE™
eConsult



How Does eConsult Work?



Create an eConsult

NOTE: The system will log you out after **20 minutes** of inactivity - you can **save** your work at any time by clicking the **Save** button.

Step 1 - Primary Care Practitioner Information

PCP Test

Primary Care Practitioner Name

123 pcp road pcpville ON
Street Address City/Municipality Province

6135551111 6135551110 mel:
Telephone Facsimile Email

Step 2 - Specialty

Please choose from the general list of Specialties:

- Addiction
- Allergy and Clinical Immunology
- Anesthesiology
- Bariatric Care
- Cancer/Oncology
- Cardiology
- CCAC
- Chiropody
- Chiropractic Care
- Concussion
- Dermatology
- Endocrinology/Diabetes
- ENT, Head/Neck Surgery
- Gastroenterology
- Genetics
- Geriatric Medicine
- Hematology/Thrombosis
- HIV
- Infectious Diseases
- Internal Medicine
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- OBS/GYN
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedics/Sports Medicine
- Pain Medicine
- Palliative Care
- Pediatrics**
- Pharmacy
- Psychiatry

Please select the most appropriate option:

Target Specialty (automatically derived):

Please note that information about scope of some specialty services is available in the [Specialties Directory](#).

Step 3 - Patient Information

/ / Select...
Date of birth *Req'd Gender *Req'd Given Name

Would you like to attach electronic files containing pertinent information to assist the consultant with better assessment of this case? ☐

Please upload your attachment(s) here and use the text file icon if needed. (e.g.: Electronic Medical Record documents, Image attachments in a common format such as pdf, jpg, etc.).

[Click here to attach a file](#) [Click here to attach a file](#) [Click here to attach a file](#)

***Note about Patient Consent and eConsult:** The CMPA has determined that patient consent is implied in an eConsult, as this interaction remains within the Circle of Care. For more information, please review the [CMPA Assessment of eConsult](#).

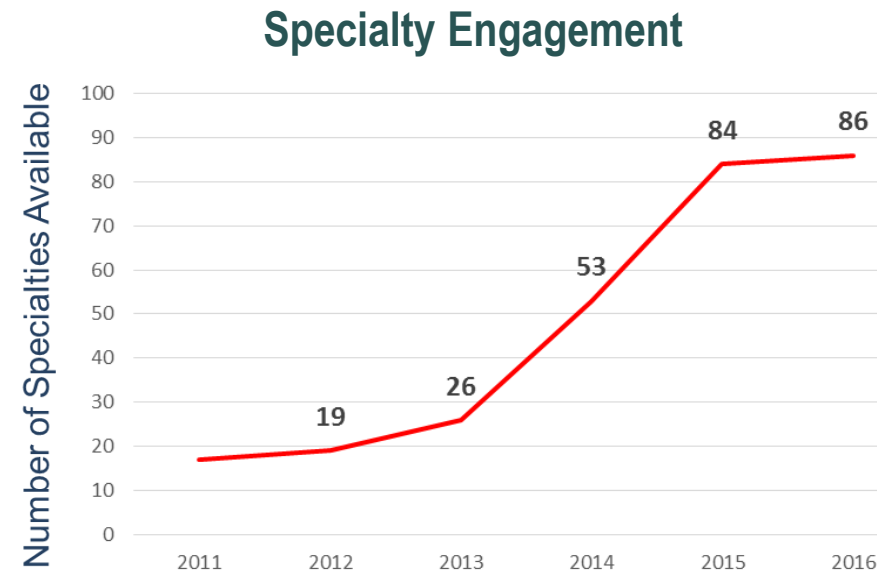
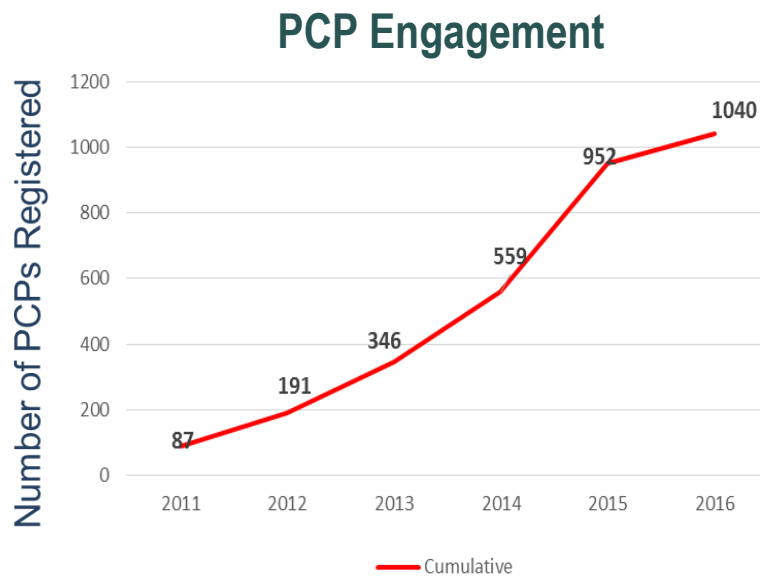
Step 4 - Background/History and Consultation Request

You may provide information concerning the patient in the space provided below (i.e. allergies, nutrition, social history), if this has not been provided in the attachment(s) already.

Please type request in the space provided below *Req'd

A look at the numbers

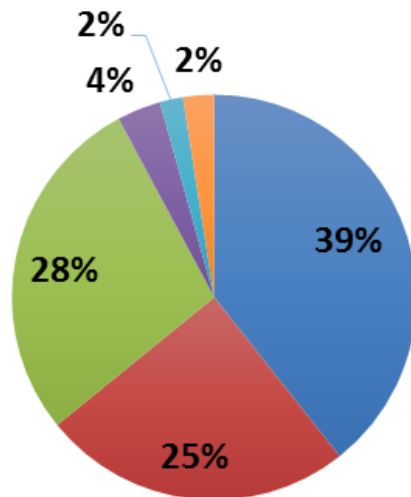
- 14,395 cases completed*
- 1,030 PCPs (879 MDs and 160 NPs) from 397 clinics in 92 towns/cities have joined the service
- 86 specialty groups available



* As of April 30, 2016

A look at the numbers

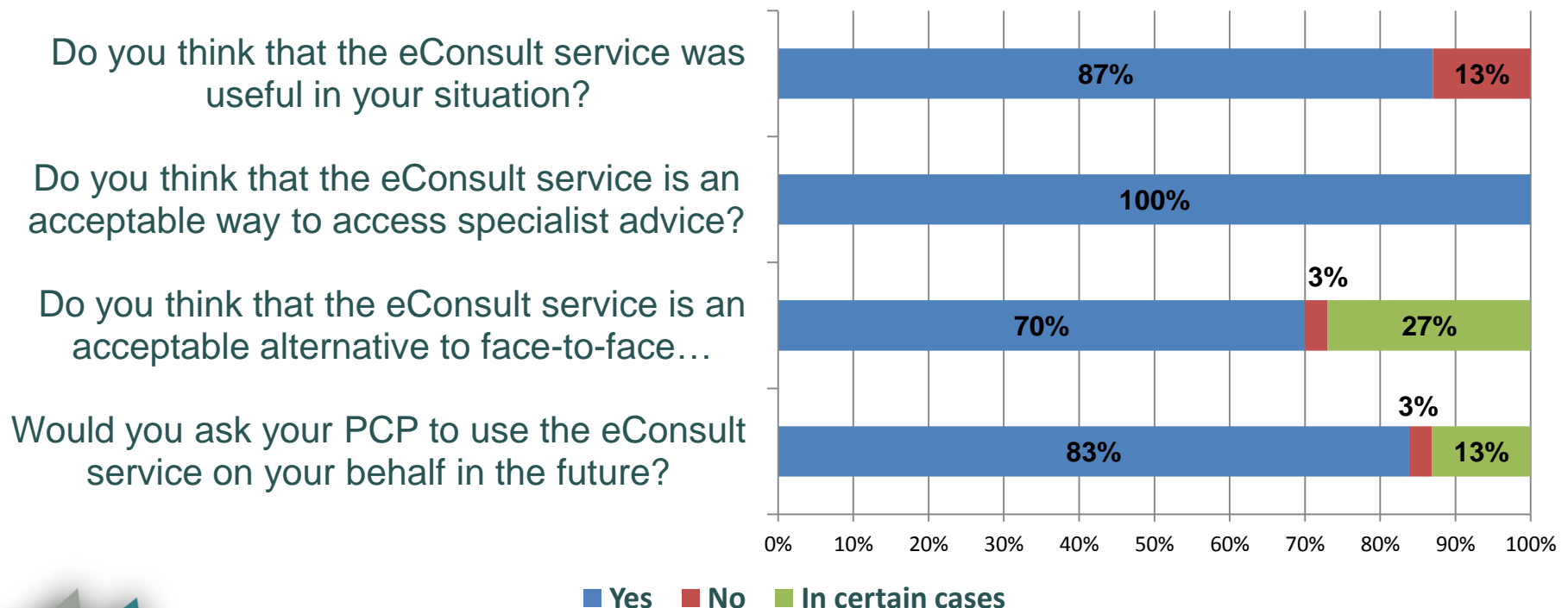
- Specialists responded to eConsults in a median of 0.8 days (**Improved access**)
- Over 60% of cases did not require a face-to-face specialist visit (efficient, coordinated care)
- In 4 % of cases, eConsult prompted a medical referral



- 1. Referral was originally contemplated but now avoided at this stage
- 2. Referral was originally contemplated and is still needed - this eConsult likely leads to a more effective visit
- 3. Referral was not originally contemplated and is still not needed - this eConsult provided useful feedback/information
- 4. Referral was not originally contemplated, but eConsult process resulted in a referral being initiated
- 5. There was no particular benefit to using eConsult in this case
- 6. Other (please comment)

Patient Experience

- Patient response to service is overwhelmingly positive
- Patients appreciate eConsult's impact on access, care quality, and continuity of care¹



¹Telephone interview conducted with 30 patients treated using the eConsult service. Final results to be published.

Matching policy to innovation



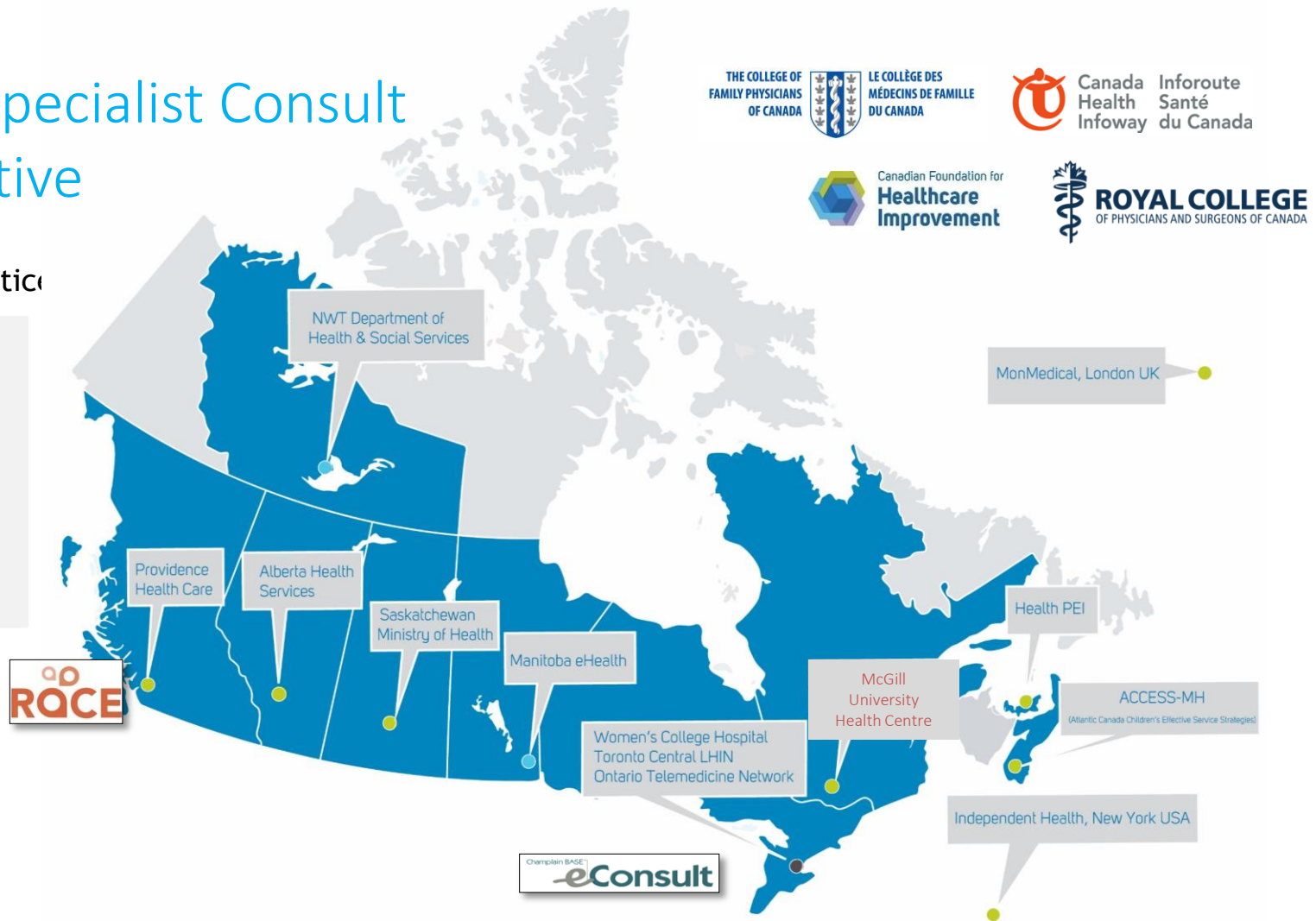
Policy Areas

- Leveraging six years of implementation experience, our team explored policy areas that could be improved to foster development of similar innovations
- Our team identified three areas where current policy (or lack thereof) affects eConsult's potential impact:
 - 1) Privacy
 - 2) Financing
 - 3) Delivery of Services

Access to Specialist Consult eCollaborative

Community of Practice

- Enrolled Teams
- Auditing Teams
- “Peer Coach” Teams



Privacy

Issue: Concerns over privacy remain a barrier to the adoption of electronic platforms or innovations among health care providers

- Provinces have created/adopted privacy legislation to protect patients
- eConsult meets all privacy requirements outlined by PHIPA
- Despite robust legislation, anxiety over electronic services remains at policymaker level (patients less concerned¹)

Suggestion: Clearer guidelines on how new technologies can fit into existing privacy policies would help innovators develop secure programs.

¹Telephone interview conducted with 30 patients treated using the eConsult service. Final results to be published.

Financing

Issue: Standard payment models may not be applicable to eConsult

- eConsult remunerates specialists at \$200/hour prorated (88% of specialists support this funding model¹)
- The service is supported by a combination of regional/provincial funding and research grants
- Negotiations to develop an eConsult fee code in Ontario have been longstanding and complex

Suggestion: Establishing an eConsult payment model would improve the service's sustainability

¹Perspectives of Champlain BASE Specialist Physicians: their experiences and recommendations for expanding eConsult services across Ontario. *Stud Health Technol Inform* 2015 <http://ebooks.iospress.nl/publication/39209>

Delivery of Services

Issue: Ambiguities in the specialist's role could create challenges in the service's expansion

- Service policies must be established to define what constitutes a specialty (e.g. social workers, chiropractors)
- Specialist selection criteria determined by patient need
- Duty of care and circle of care must be clearly articulated to all participants
- Provincial certification limits capacity for interjurisdictional consultation; policies on eConsult are unclear

Suggestion: A clear policy supporting interjurisdictional eConsults could greatly improve access to specialists for patients in remote provinces/territories

BASE Model and Vision

PCPs and their patients will have equitable access to specialist advice through eConsults

Goal

Each region in Canada will have access to an eConsult service

Operations	Engagement	Model of Delivery	Quality Assurance	Workflow	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration • Funding • Payment model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional clinical champions • Key organizations • LHIN leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population-based • Addresses regional gaps in specialist access • Primary care led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics • Leadership • Auditing • Comparison to other regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient • Integrated into referral workflow • Support integration into EMR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage eConsult to build capacity in region through CPD • Enhances specialist-PCP relationship
Program management, leadership, quality assurance					
Technology platform: OTN, SharePoint, other regional platforms					
National Partnerships: RCPSC, CHI, CFHI, CFPC, CAN, CPSI, CMPA					

Our Collaborations

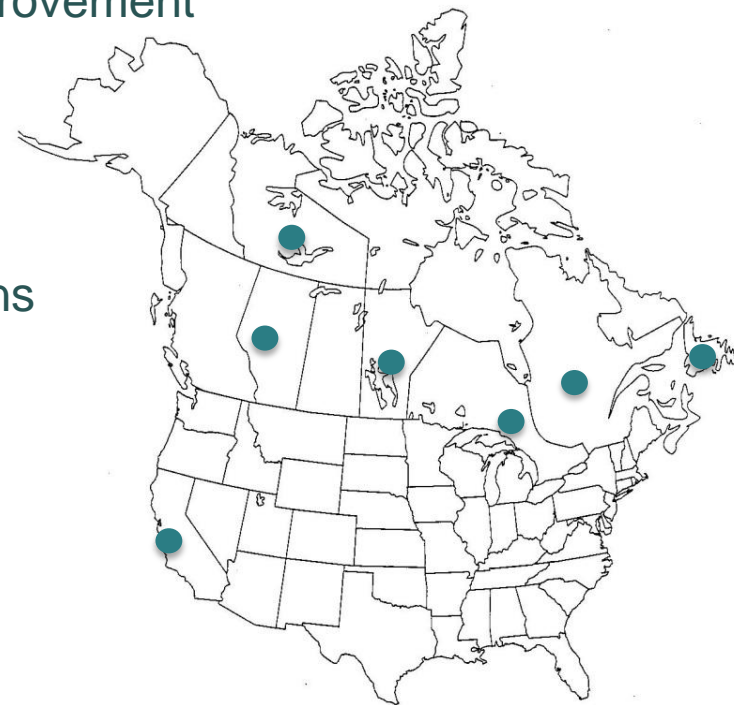
International eConsult Collaborative Network of researchers and knowledge users from Canada and from US (UCSF, MAYO, VA)

National Organizations:

- College of Family Physicians of Canada
- Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement
- Canadian Medical Protective Association
- Canadian Patient Safety Institute
- Canadian Nurses Association
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons
- Canada Health Infoway

Provincial Organizations

- Health Quality Ontario
- MOHLTC
- Québec College of Family Physicians



Questions for Discussion

- What concerns pertaining to patient privacy could impact the implementation of eHealth interventions such as the eConsult service?
- How can discrepancies in different regions' policies on electronic consultation be overcome to support interjurisdictional eConsults?
- What policies could be put in place to sufficiently compensate providers while providing a sustainable source of funding for eConsult services?

Thank You!

For more information, check out our eBook



Available in ibook (for Mac) and pdf (for PC) from
www.ChamplainBASEeConsult.ca



The Evidence Base for Champlain BASE

Better Population Health

- 1) Building Access to Specialist Care through E-Consultation. *Open Med* 2013 <http://www.openmedicine.ca/article/view/551>
- 2) Utilization, Benefits and Impact of an e-Consultation Service across Diverse Specialties and Primary Care Providers. *Telemed J eHealth* 2013 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23980939>
- 3) Improving access to chronic pain services through eConsultation: A cross-sectional study of the Champlain BASE eConsult service. *Pain Medicine* 2016 <http://painmedicine.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/04/02/pm.pnw038>
- 4) Rationale and model for integrating the pharmacist into the outpatient referral-consultation process. *Can Fam Physician* 2016 <http://www.cfp.ca/content/62/2/111?etoc>

Improved Patient Experience

- 5) Patients' perspectives on wait times and the referral-consultation process while attending a tertiary diabetes and endocrinology centre: Is eConsultation an acceptable option? *J Diabetes* 2015 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25797111/>

Lower Costs

- 6) Applied Health Research Question Report: Understanding needs and impact of eConsult in the Champlain LHIN. *MOHLTC Report* 2014. http://www.phcresearchnetwork.com/documents/King_LiddyAHRQ%20Abstract_INSPIRE.pdf
- 7) What are the costs of improving access to specialists through eConsultation? The Champlain BASE experience. *Stud Health Technol Inform* 2015 <http://ebooks.iospress.nl/volumearticle/39213>

Improved Provider Experience

- 8) Impact of and satisfaction with a new eConsult service: a mixed methods study of primary care providers. *J Am Board Fam Med* 2015 <http://www.jabfm.org/content/28/3/394.full>
- 9) A comparison of referral patterns to a multispecialty eConsultation service between nurse practitioners and family physicians: the case for eConsult. *J Am Assoc Nurse Pract* 2015 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2327-6924.12266/abstract>
- 10) Perspectives of Champlain BASE Specialist Physicians: their experiences and recommendations for expanding eConsult services across Ontario. *Stud Health Technol Inform* 2015 <http://ebooks.iospress.nl/publication/39209>
- 11) Impact of Question Content on e-Consultation Outcomes. *Telemed J eHealth* 2015 <http://online.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/tmj.2015.0081>
- 12) Harnessing eConsultations to Improve Practice-Based Learning in Endocrinology. *Can J Diabetes* 2015 [http://www.canadianjournalofdiabetes.com/article/S1499-2671\(15\)00687-5/abstract](http://www.canadianjournalofdiabetes.com/article/S1499-2671(15)00687-5/abstract)

Exploring Policy/Implementation Issues

- 13) Ten Steps to Establishing an e-Consultation Service to Improve Access to Specialist Care. *Telemed J eHealth* 2013 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24073898>
- 14) The Current State of Electronic Consultation & Electronic Referral Systems in Canada: an Environmental Scan. *Stud Health Technol Inform* 2015 <http://ebooks.iospress.nl/volumearticle/39214>
- 15) Critical requirements and considerations for establishing and participating in an eConsultation service: Lessons learned from the Champlain BASE team. *E Healthc Law Rev* 2015. http://www.dimock.com/files/articles/GDM_NP_ElectronicHealthcareLawReview_5%231.pdf
- 16) Policy Innovation is Needed to Match Health Care Delivery Reform: The Story of the Champlain BASE eConsult Service. *Health Reform Observer* 2015 <https://escarpmentpress.org/hro-ors/article/view/2747>