



**Health Innovation and Information  
Technology Centre (HiTeC)**

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# Global e-Health Policy and Professional Portability

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## Objectives

- Discuss -

- Perspective and Overview
  - Global e-Health Policy
  - Professional Portability
- Hypothetical Scenario
  - The Issues
- The Concern
  - Example – Malaysia and South Africa
- U21 Role
- Future direction

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# Overview

- Global e-Health ~ What Is It ? -

*The sustainable global integration of ICT into the practice of protecting and promoting health across geo-political, socio-economic, cultural, and temporal barriers - including research and education - to facilitate health, public and community health, health systems development, and epidemiology.*

From: Scott RE, Palacios MF. e-Health - Challenges of Going Global. In: *Collaboration in Context*, Scott CM, Thurston WE (Eds). Institute for Gender Research & Health Promotion Research Group, University of Calgary, 2003.

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# Overview

- Global e-Health Policy ~ Why Is It Important? -

- The **beauty** of global e-health:
  - Networked capability
  - Ability to transcend barriers
    - Geo-political; Socio-economic, Cultural; Temporal
- The **fear** of global e-health
  - Networked capability
  - Ability to transcend barriers
    - Geo-political; Socio-economic, Cultural; Temporal

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## Overview

### - Professional Mobility ~ What Is It? -

- Ability of Healthcare Professionals to simply and efficiently practice across geo-political barriers
  - Physically
  - Virtually

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## Overview

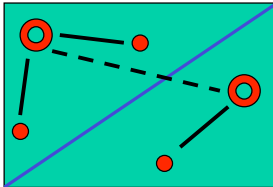
### - Professional Mobility ~ Why Is It Important? -

- Demographic reality
  - Aging population
  - Inadequate and shrinking number of HCP
- Need to work smarter
  - Maximise utility of what we have

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# Issues

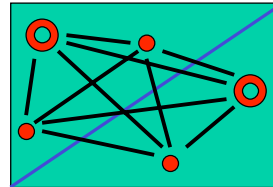
- Policy – Needed for Networks! -



**Now**

Inter-jurisdictional / 'Glocal' e-Health Policy

**Soon!**



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# Perspective

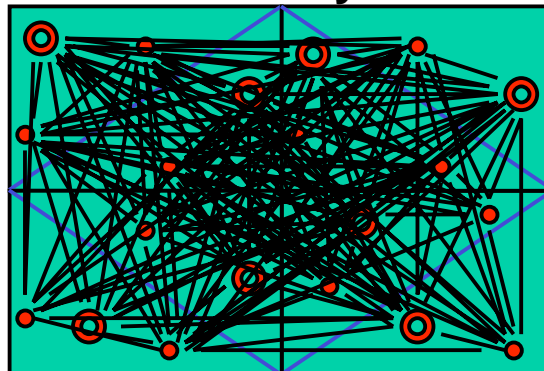
- Why? Disproportionate Complexity!! -

*Anyone*

*Anytime*

*Anywhere*

**Ultimately !!**



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# Hypothetical Scenario

- What if .....!! -

## Scenario:

- Person recently visited Tanzania, now returned to Edson, Alberta, Canada
- Upon return has fallen ill with rare tropical disease
- Specialist located in Aga Khan Hospital, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- Videoconsult desired for diagnosis and treatment?

**Can we do this?**

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# Hypothetical Scenario

- Reality Bites .....!! -

- CIO 'on side'

## **BUT**

- Senior Administration asks:
  - Certification
  - Training
  - Expertise recognized in Canada?
  - Remuneration ?
  - Clinical accountability?
  - Liability – Hospital and HCP?

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# Hypothetical Scenario

- Reality Bites Harder .....!! -

## And ..... still more issues:

- Clinical standards equivalent?
- Scope of Practice?
- Impact of privacy laws?
- Consent process?
- Access and authorization for patient EHR?
- Any regional, national, or international rules?
- Will this open the floodgates for future requests?

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# Hypothetical Scenario

- Reality Bites .....!! -

## Outcome:

- *Confusion and doubt reign*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> attempt within Canada*
  - *another Province*
  - *same issues raised*
- *VC cancelled indefinitely*  
*'due to technical difficulties'*
- ***... and the patient?***

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## The Concern

- Accidental or Malicious ..... -

- Inappropriate e-health policy in any single jurisdiction may hamper or even cripple the ability of e-health to fulfill its potential

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## The Concern

- Example: Malaysian Telemedicine Act -

- Malaysia:
  - Very pro-active and courageous
    - Legislation (e.g. Telemedicine Act, 1997), and
    - Guidelines (e.g. Teleconsultation guidelines)
- Policy 10, 'Teleconsultation Beyond National Borders'
  - "Patients and health care professionals should be provided the opportunity to seek an expert opinion and treatment from overseas through teleconsultation".

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## The Concern

- Example: Malaysian Telemedicine Act -

### But, Subclauses of 10.4

- “Foreign experts can provide teleconsultation to healthcare professional and/or patients in Malaysia **only at the invitation of the local healthcare personnel**”
- “All overseas experts who are invited to provide opinion or who are referred cases **must be registered with the appropriate regulatory authorities in Malaysia**”.
- These process for invitation and / or registration are not specified.

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## Global e-Health Policy

- U21's Role ~ Rationale -

- Academe must:
  - Engage with today's most crucial questions
  - Include higher education as part of the process
- Goal
  - Inform the Global e-Health Policy debate

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# Global e-Health Policy

- U21's Role ~ Combining Forces -

- Global Observatory for e-Health (GOe)  
A global resource.
- Universitas 21 (U21)  
Global e-Health Committee.  
Global e-Health Policy Subcommittee
- Now:  
WHO-GOe / U21 Global e-Health Policy  
Committee

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# Global e-Health Policy

- U21's Role ~ Combining Forces -

- Now:  
WHO-GOe / U21 Global e-Health Policy  
Committee
- Mission:  
Advance understanding and impact of GeP  
Promote awareness of issues requiring GeP  
Inform the debate around GeP (evidence-based)  
Promote proven practice in the development of GeP

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