

## EHealth 2005 Conference Position Paper

I believe one of the greatest impacts eHealth technology can have on healthcare is enabling the general public to take a greater role in the management of their own health.

We can offer patients not only secure access to recent lab results, but also present information in such a way that they can see improvements or decline in their health. We can also provide them with health advice at different points in their lives. For example, when they should receive vaccinations, or check their blood pressure, or book a preventative screening test so that early indicator of illness can be detected and corrected. We can also help them prepare for their visit with their doctor or specialist so they know what to expect, what questions they should ask, and what they should tell the clinical staff. By affecting some of the basic determinants of health, we can try to find ways of delaying or reducing the severity of chronic illnesses.

For chronic illnesses, there are projects like MobiHealth in Europe, that allow health centres to remotely monitor vital signs of patients at risk of heart and pulmonary disease, and other risk factors. These devices allow health centres to be alerted to early indicators of adverse events. They also allow patients to delay hospitalization, or be discharged earlier freeing up hospital resources for other patients, while still being able to respond to adverse patient events pre or post-treatment.

Electronic media can also be used as a way of building communities: providing information to the general public about available community services and upcoming events (recreational, social, health etc.) based on their needs, and link them to other patients or support groups that help them cope with their condition.

Tony Tam  
Candidate MHS. Clinical Engineering  
Institute of Biomaterials & Biomedical Engineering  
University of Toronto