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Ministry of IT Health net’s Telemedicine Rural Support program- Pakistan - Lessons Learnt

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The Government of Pakistan has taken a bold initiative to utilize ICT for transforming delivery of public services by making such services more effective, inclusive, efficient and available at the door steps of common man. Offering quality advanced health care services to rural and remote areas of Pakistan through the use of telemedicine is one such endeavor in this direction. Setting up rural telemedicine centers will enable rural population to seek consultation, advice and treatment from specialist doctors in urban center hospitals, without having to travel hundreds of kilometers and spending their meager financial resources on related transportation and accommodation costs.

"MoIT-Health NET" is a telemedicine project meant to assist the government in transforming delivery of health care services and making them available at the door-steps of a common man, through the use of Information and Communication Technology. The project has demonstrated the use of technology as a solution for overcoming the lack of quality health care infrastructure in rural/remote areas of Pakistan. The objective is to be achieved through setting up a telemedicine hub, in Holy Family Hospital Rawalpindi, connected via PAKSAT-1 to 4 telemedicine centers each to be set-up in rural hospitals, by utilizing and complementing available national resources and infrastructure. The project is designed to offer Basic telemedicine services including Tele-Diagnosis/Consultations: Specialists in hub hospitals have been able to examine patients remotely and provide diagnosis and consultation Diseases covered include ENT, Skin, Chest, Cardiology, and Psychiatry. Teleconsultations in: Surgery, ENT, Plastic Surgery, Orthopedics’. Beside Teleconsultation regular teaching sessions and CME PROGRAMS, participation in Grand rounds is a regular feature for remote hospitals and clinics. Experience from 12 remote centers in the country will be shared and lessons learnt during implementation of the program will be shared. This experience can easily be replicated in Pacific islands.

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