

Technologies to reach older persons with health-care services / Dong-Kyun Park

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Abstrak

This review examines telemedicine practices, which are separated into teleconsultations and telemonitoring, that have applied information and communication technologies (ICT) for the delivery of health-care services to older persons in the Republic of Korea, Japan, Australia and China. The practices featured from the Republic of Korea and Japan are telemedicine pilot projects to manage chronic disease patients more efficiently and at lower cost. The projects included a health management curriculum, with emphasis on nutrition and exercise guidance. The participants in each pilot project found the services to be helpful in managing their health; the project evaluation findings also indicated several meaningful medical improvements. In Australia, a Home Monitoring of Chronic Disease for Aged Care Project was designed in 2014 to manage ageing patients with chronic diseases at home through various telemedicine devices. In China, the Ningbo Cloud Hospital was established in 2015 to control increasing health-care expenses and to resolve difficulties for individuals to see a doctor. More than 2,000 patients are now registered for online video consultations and prescriptions. The featured examples illustrate how the application of telemedicine to a health-care system not only promotes accessibility between doctors and patients but can save on construction costs for new facilities and the cost of supplying medical personnel in remote areas, which thus can help reduce national medical expenses. However, to initiate ICT-based health-care service delivery, governments in Asia and the Pacific need to first establish related policies that promote telemedicine.