

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006

## **Telemedicine User Champion Supporting Statement**

As a burns consultant at Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH) I have found the telemedicine system an invaluable tool to allow me to treat and assess many more patients than I could with out it. It allows me to assess burns patients while still in their referring hospital so that I can start managing them immediately. This is especially useful for major burns when I can identify potential problems and have them resolved before they even arrive at QVH. Furthermore I can have a reception team appropriately prepared if emergency surgery is required.

My junior staff can discuss all burns referrals with me using telemedicine so that we can give best advice and avoid unnecessary transfers. This is also the case with patients attending the burns dressing clinic. Photos of problem wounds can be reviewed at any time avoiding delays to patients' dressing and saving their dignity by not having numerous people coming in to see them. As all of our new patients get photographed along with those with difficult wounds I can effectively see all the patients coming through the service. A few years ago one consultant could never have been able to review 1300 different patients a year while still being able to conduct his normal day to day work.

I have also found the system very useful when discussing cases with colleagues. It is usually very difficult to arrange joint assessments in clinic and telemedicine now allows me to discuss cases more conveniently and with as many as 16 colleagues to ensure that there is as much input as possible for difficult clinical scenarios.

I would not have been able to raise the standards within my department without having significantly more senior input. This system has allowed me to do this without having to appoint more consultants while still being able to carry out all that is required of me.

Telemedicine has improved my department's efficiency, enabled earlier and more accurate treatment, raised standards and allowed input from a greater number of personnel at a low cost and with minimal effort. I truly do not know what we would do without it.

Baljit Dheansa  
Consultant Burns & Plastic Surgeon  
Queen Victoria Hospital