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Telepathology: Current status and perspectives for use in dermatopathology

Healthcare managers and pathologists have been tasked to find solutions to improve pathology workflow and provide all patients with access to specialty pathologists. As a result, the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital established a Telepathology Center of Excellence. Telepathology is defined as electronic multimedia communication between an acquisition site and a remote site pathologist for the purpose of primary diagnosis and second opinion consultations. The James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital Telepathology Center of Excellence has identified requirements for interoperable telepathology systems and pioneered a solution for dermatopathology which works integrated with our Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS). The Apollo Robotic Telepathology Workstation, utilized in our system, is a dynamic telepathology system designed utilizing a multi tiered open system software solution. Apollo Path Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS) manage images from all laboratory imaging devices and related hardware. The telepathology objectives include: Expediting referrals to experts and specialists, improving telehealth workload capture, enhancing secondary reading for diagnostic verification, peer review and quality assurance as well as group discussion and education during clinical pathological conferences (tumor board). The implementation deployed Apollo systems to Bay Pines VA Medical Center (St. Petersburg, FL) and the VA Caribbean Healthcare System (San Juan, PR). Both systems are live and used for second opinion diagnostic dermatopathology consultations (Dermatopathologist is at James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital). This system implementation has brought quicker, more accurate diagnoses across VISN 8 and the results of the implementation provide useful information to healthcare managers and decision makers who must find a more efficient way to provide care to our nation's Veterans.

Biography

Stephen M Mastorides is the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service of the James A Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa, Florida for the past ten years. He is a skilled Pathologist with many years of experience in management specializing in the introduction of new and advanced technologies into the clinical laboratory. As Chief, he has helped to develop the Tampa VA Molecular Diagnostics Center of Excellence, which provides molecular testing services for numerous medical centers in the VISN 8 including the Orlando VAMC, North Florida/South Georgia VAMC, Miami VAMC and Bay Pines VAMC. He also oversees a large inpatient and outpatient phlebotomy service which draws over 700 patients and 2100 specimens per day. His research focuses on investigating advanced laboratory technologies including but not limited to telepathology, molecular diagnostics, diagnostic nanotechnologies and practical implementation of genomic and proteomic testing. He is also the Site Director of the Million Veteran Program (CSP #G002).

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