

LEGAL ASPECTS OF TELEMEDICINE - A STATUS REPORT

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(abstract)

From the very start of modern telemedicine - a good decade ago - legal aspects have been a major issue and concern. This is still the case. Telemedical services have developed and are being used within an increasing number of medical fields. The use of telemedicine have brought organisational changes and new ways of communicating both between health care personnel and between patients and health care providers. The patients themselves are taking a new role towards the health care system, acting more as consumers than passive health care receivers. And on the technological field, the growth of the Internet and its use for health care advice and treatment, is giving new legislative challenges.

At the Norwegian Centre for Telemedicine, we have worked systematically with these issues for several years. Our work has been focused on identifying legal issues and barriers, research, communicating with health authorities, running projects and taking part in projects both nationally and internationally. This work is an ongoing process. New issues and new problems are always emerging as the whole field is developing.

In this presentation, we will give you a brief report on the current status of selected legal aspects of telemedicine and ehealth. We will present some of the most important issues that have been identified, the work we have done with these and some of the clarifications that have been made so far. The presentation is mainly based on experiences from within the Norwegian legislation, but we believe many of these will have relevance for a larger audience, both in the Nordic Region and beyond.