

ConferMED eConsults Frequently Asked Questions

PROGRAM

Question	Answer
What is ConferMED?	ConferMED is a non-profit, national network of specialists providing eConsults and other telehealth services to providers across the country.
What is an eConsult?	An eConsult is a peer-to-peer electronic communication between the primary care provider and a specialist in which the specialist reviews clinical information and provides advice and guidance to the submitting provider.
How do primary care providers (PCPs) access eConsults for their patients?	Practices sign up with ConferMED to access its specialty eConsult network. ConferMED's implementation experts work with each practice to embed the eConsult process into current referral workflows, taking advantage of existing capabilities of each EHR system to communicate and exchange clinical information in a secure, HIPAA-compliant manner. No new software or external websites are required.
How does ConferMED assess the quality of an eConsult?	ConferMED carefully recruits only the best specialists in their field and focuses on those with a particular interest in educating and supporting primary care providers. All ConferMED specialists are rigorously trained in how to deliver clear, concise consults that are appropriate for the setting where primary care is being delivered. ConferMED has a team of primary care doctors that review specialists' consults and provide regular feedback on performance and quality.
How much time does it take to get started with ConferMED?	Getting started with ConferMED is easy. ConferMED's implementation specialists work with each practice to develop an easy-to-use implementation strategy. Most practices can begin submitting consults within one to two months.

PAYMENT

Question	Answer
Who pays for eConsults?	ConferMED has a variety of options for payment. In many cases, insurance plans pay ConferMED directly for eConsults. ConferMED also has several low-cost options for health centers wanting to implement eConsults for patients without insurance or those with insurance coverage that does not pay for eConsults. ConferMED's sales team works with each clinic to design a plan that works for them.
Will the specialist be paid for the eConsult?	Yes, the specialist is reimbursed for each eConsult performed by ConferMED. ConferMED contracts directly with the specialists and credentials the specialists into the ConferMED network.

WORKFLOW

Question	Answer
Is there a need to install dedicated software into our systems?	No. ConferMED is a specialty provider group, not a software platform. Referrals to ConferMED can easily be incorporated into a practice's standard referral workflow, often utilizing the practice's existing EHR capabilities.

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WORKFLOW *Continued from previous page*

Question	Answer
Is there a way to ask follow up questions after receiving an eConsult?	ConferMED has a built in feature called “direct dialogue” that allows each PCP to submit follow up questions to the specialist without having to submit a new consult.
How do I order an eConsult from ConferMED?	ConferMED’s goal is to make the process of ordering an eConsult simple, and as close as possible to the established process for ordering a face-to-face consult. ConferMED’s implementation team works with each health center to map out the process. In all cases, the PCP orders the eConsult from their own EHR and does not have to log into a separate system.
Is there a liability concern with eConsults?	eConsults are considered a very low risk form of consultation that have many benefits for patients and providers. While the PCP retains treatment authority and responsibility for their patient, the ConferMED eConsults gives them the benefit of getting feedback and advice from specialists rapidly, much sooner than they would if waiting for a face-to-face visit. In addition, unlike a traditional, informal “curbside” consult, with an eConsult the specialist is able to view patient data and the PCP receives a detailed note that is retained in the medical record.
Risk Management: who bears the medical/legal burden if specialist recommendation is not appropriate?	The PCP retains the provider-patient relationship. The PCP is responsible for the care provided to the patient. Specialist eConsults provide advice and guidance, but are never a substitute for the primary care provider’s judgment and should never be used to offer care for which the primary care provider is not comfortable providing. ConferMED has a robust quality review process for all its specialists to ensure that specialists provide guidance and advice that is appropriate for primary care.
How would e-Consult information be into the EHR?	ConferMED’s process is similar to the process used to submit and receive consults from any outside provider or practice group. Referrals to ConferMED are ordered by the PCP in their EHR, routed to ConferMED, and returned back to the PCP in their EHR.
How secure is the process for submitting dermatology photos via a smart phone or tablet?	ConferMED’s process for receiving images from smart devices uses a secure process similar to that used by banks to receive check deposits. The image is captured and transmitted to ConferMED in a HIPAA-compliant, secure fashion. No patient information or images are retained on the smart device.
Are there camera/photo requirements?	Most current mobile phone, tablet, or “point and shoot” cameras can capture suitable images. A dermatoscope can be used to capture more accurate, magnified images when evaluating smaller lesions.
Is the platform HIPAA compliant?	Yes.
Is there an option to save the photo on the local device (smart phone, tablet, etc.)?	ConferMED does not recommend storing photos on personal devices.