Telemedicine Cooperation Project*

Outline

The project was first discussed at the Arctic Council Information and Communication Technology Conference in Iceland, October 2003 upon the initiative of Northern Forum (NF) and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) representatives. It was agreed that Alaska, Sakha Republic and Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug (AO) would pursue a cooperative project involving sharing information and transfer of technology in a pilot telemedicine project. A preliminary pilot project is being designed that will place telemedicine equipment in 4 selected villages (two in each Russian region).

Project phases
Phase I. Initial project team meeting and reviewing telemed opportunities in the North. Attendance of the International Telehealth Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, March 2004. Visit by Russian telemed specialists to rural/remote Alaskan villages
Phase II. Visit by Alaska telemed specialists to rural/remote villages in Khanty-Mansiysk AO and Sakha to identify potential for transfer of Alaskan technology, August 2004
Phase III. Preparation for equipment transfer, translation of materials and program documents into Russian, preparation of grant documents, purchase of equipment
Phase IV. Installation and training
Phase V. Review of project implementation and analysis.

Project objectives
The entire project is aimed at promoting telemedicine development in remote areas of Russian regions potentially applying Alaskan equipment and technology. The implementation phase involves testing a modular computer setup and software adapted to work in rural/remote Russian locations. Russian experts will be trained how to handle the equipment under the supervision of Alaskan specialists and telemed consultation will be provided to remote villages with their participation. In a larger scope, the project is intended to build a network of specialists who can continue to communicate and assist each other in addressing medical services for remote locations in the North. The results will be used as a model for cooperation among other NF regions and will contribute to telehealth evaluation process in Arctic Council states.

Implementation and coordination strategy for Phase II
The implementation and coordination strategy of Phase II takes in the following activities. The full description, translation and approval of the project and its preliminary budget among partners should be made by late April. For this end, Alaska representatives should present a full list of visitors to Russian regions, brief equipment description and shipping details from Alaska to Moscow. Russian regions should provide full information as to model areas and selected villages that include brief geographic description, demographic and clinical picture, and state of telecommunication infrastructure, as well as equipment shipping routes and terms (possible duties

* Proposed by the Northern Forum and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)
costs) on the Russia’s territory. In addition, the project shall be coordinated with local authorities by that time. If necessary, project parties will begin to draw up a contract (agreement) concerning the delivery (sale and purchase, transfer of ownership rights) of equipment to be signed upon final approval by partners.

Overall coordination will be provided by the NF Secretariat in Anchorage. Coordination with high officials involves the project’s approval with NF Regional Coordinators in Khanty-Mansiysk, 1-3 June, 2004 and the Executive Committee in Yakutsk, 22-25 July 2004. Besides, materials will be submitted, through the US State Department, to the Arctic Council as an implementation project within the Sustainable Development Working Group.

Upon the accomplishment of Phase II, parties provide reports to the NF Secretariat no later than late August. A general report will be put together by the Secretariat and presented at corresponding NF and AC meetings.

The project will be implemented, first of all, in above-indicated NF regions due to limited resources however regions interested in participation may attend project meetings. Upon successful implementation the project will be promoted to other NF regions.