

# Case Study



Personal Videoconferencing:  
increasing efficiency and  
flexibility while improving  
patient follow-up care.

## *The Challenge*

### How to improve a physician's lifestyle while continuing to provide quality care

As a neurologist based in the Greater Toronto Area, Dr. Mark Guttman provides concurrent care to patients throughout the province of Ontario. His practice includes Parkinson's and Huntington's disease sub-specialties, conditions that can make travelling increasingly difficult for patients as their disease progresses.

Twelve years ago, Dr. Guttman added telemedicine to his practice. While this reduced patient travel to the nearest telemedicine clinic, often in their home communities, his patient capacity was constrained by the amount of time he had to travel to and from a telemedicine site. He ameliorated that by installing a telemedicine suite at his office, eventually adding a second suite so he and his associate could conduct concurrent telemedicine clinics. While these changes were beneficial, they didn't offer Dr. Guttman the flexibility to provide care from anywhere other than his office.

## *The Solution*

# Using Personal Videoconferencing to connect to OTN's secure telemedicine network

Dr. Guttman added Personal Videoconferencing to his practice because he believed that the service would provide greater personal flexibility than that of his in-office telemedicine studio. He now spends part of his week consulting from home because the service eliminates the 90 minute commute to his office. "As long as connectivity is business-grade," noted Dr. Guttman, "I can consult from anywhere without comprising quality of care."

*"Patient satisfaction is worth the small changes required to accommodate telemedicine in your practice."*

## *The Benefits*

# Quality of care is the same and in some cases, improves, with telemedicine

Dr. Guttman surveyed his telemedicine patients and found that more than 90% believed that a telemedicine consult was as good as or better than a traditional face-to-face visit. Beyond patient satisfaction with the visit itself, the benefits of telemedicine include the reduction or even elimination of the costs associated with travel to the appointment, or lost wages for missing work incurred by a family member also attending the appointment. Dr. Guttman believes that the improved concurrent care for patients in advanced stages of a disease is also a significant benefit.



*"As long as connectivity is business-grade, I can consult from anywhere with no loss of quality of care."*

Advice to new users:

## Now is the time to add telemedicine to your practice

Dr. Guttman was an early adopter. He has experienced every step in the evolution of telemedicine. He suggested that physicians involved in chronic disease management of any kind will benefit from adding telemedicine to their practice. With the introduction of Personal Videoconferencing, he believes the time is now for adding telemedicine to your practice. An investment in the service is nominal in comparison to the \$50,000 Dr. Guttman spent to install the first telemedicine studio in his office more than a decade ago. "There is no better time for adding telemedicine," he believes, "because of Personal Videoconferencing's flexibility and ease of use."

*The interview with Dr. Guttman was conducted using OTN's secure Personal Videoconferencing service.*



Mark Guttman MD, FRCPC

*Mark Guttman is a neurologist specializing in movement disorders with a focus on Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease. He is chair of the board and clinical director of the Centre for Movement Disorders in Markham which has an innovative multi-disciplinary team approach to deal with these chronic progressive conditions. In addition to being heavily involved in patient care, Mark is also engaged in clinical research with clinical trials, observational studies, development of new clinical outcome measures and health services research.*

*Mark was an early adopter of telemedicine and has been seeing patients initially with the North Network since 2001. OTN is part of his daily clinical practice and he has been part of the OTN board since its inception. Mark also sits on the board of the New Israel Fund of Canada.*



## Personal Videoconferencing for Your Health Care Practice

*Personal Videoconferencing is secure, safe and reliable, and is subject to Ontario's Personal Health Information Act (PHIPA) and Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). The service is state-of-the-art with privacy protocols that meet or exceed provincial and federal standards.*

*Patients do not pay additional fees. Physicians may bill OHIP for telemedicine at a premium.*

*Training and support are provided to Personal Videoconferencing adopters. OTN is a recognized provider of healthcare distance education. That skill and experience are applied to all online Personal Videoconferencing training modules. Experienced OTN staff provide support to all users.*

*As the world leader in telemedicine, OTN helps Ontario get more out of the healthcare system, bridging the distance of time and geography to bring more patients the care they need, where and when they need it. Using innovative technology OTN streamlines the health care process, while also expanding the way knowledge is shared and how the medical community interacts with each other and with patients. The efficiencies achieved help health care budgets go farther. Funded by the Government of Ontario, OTN is a not-for-profit organization. For more information, go to [www.otn.ca](http://www.otn.ca)*