

IMO AGM 2016

# A NEW **PRESCRIPTION** FOR HEALTH

Mobile Health, Telemedicine,  
and Patient Confidentiality

Telemedicine: An Overview



# A Definition of Telemedicine

- Telemedicine can be defined as the exchange of medical information over a distance.
- It can be doctor to doctor, or doctor to patient.
- The use of telemedicine is growing at a strong rate, particularly in the USA.



- Significant growth of 20-30% is projected for the telemedicine sector.



# Potential Benefits of Telemedicine

- **Efficient Transfer of Patient Information**
- **Improved Outcomes in Certain Cases**
  - **Emergency care**
  - **Chronic Disease Management**
- **Cost efficiency?**



# Potential Risks of Telemedicine

- **There are greater privacy risks for patients.**
- **General Practice Perspective**
  - **Open to abuse if patient can't be identified**
  - **Misdiagnosis or failure to adhere to clinical guidelines**
  - **Corporate models and interruption of continuity of care**

# Conclusion

- cost-efficiency of telemedicine in many of its applications in healthcare has not been established
- Useful for doctor to doctor communication or where distance is an issue otherwise there is insufficient evidence to support its widespread use
- The expansion of telemedicine threatens to invite commercially orientated health services organisations to offer services advertised as replacements for face-to-face medical care.