

## Virtual Multidisciplinary Cancer Conferences (MCCs): The Role of Technology in Achieving Success

**Target Audience:** Individuals interested or involved in organizing videoconference MCCs

**Background:** Using videoconferencing for MCCs is an excellent way to: engage hospitals; connect with colleagues locally and regionally; and provide expertise to hospitals that do not have all disciplines on site (e.g. not all hospitals have radiation oncologists).

Videoconferencing for MCCs minimizes the impact of the province’s expansive geography to provide exceptional cancer care.

**Purpose:** Provide knowledge regarding what should be considered when implementing videoconference MCCs; offer information on roles and responsibilities, necessary and optional equipment, relevant education and troubleshooting, inform on challenges to consider, and trick and tips to help with videoconferencing. *Information for this tool kit was gathered by interviewing all 14 MCC Regional Coordinators. Where appropriate, Telemedicine Coordinators and Hospital IT representatives were included in the interviews.*

### Roles & Responsibilities

When it comes to organizing videoconference MCCs, several individuals can be involved: Telemedicine Coordinators, MCC Coordinators and Hospital Departments such as Information Technology (IT) or Audio Visual (AV). **OTN connects you to every hospital and hundreds of other health care locations across the province.** Hospital resources vary across the province and so when it comes time to organize a videoconference, there may be different individuals involved. The role of Telemedicine and MCC Coordinators and the hospital IT department will be of focus.

#### Telemedicine Coordinator

The Telemedicine Coordinator is employed by the hospital, however videoconferencing is his/her responsibility. Some hospitals may have a Telemedicine department or it may be included in the IT department.

**For MCCs, the Telemedicine Coordinator may:**

- schedule MCCs in Ncompass and register participating sites
- establish the OTN connection
- connect and communicate with partner sites
- maintain, set up, run and shut down equipment, e.g. computer, camera, microphones
- trouble shoot with OTN and IT
- act as the point of contact for staff, partner sites and OTN

**In general, the Telemedicine Coordinator may also:**

- train others on equipment
- consult on equipment purchases and assist with installation
- work/coordinate with the MCC Coordinator

Note: OTN suggests that MCCs be scheduled as clinical events and that the number of patients be recorded in Ncompass.

#### MCC Coordinator

In some hospitals, the MCC Coordinator also has the role of the Telemedicine Coordinator. When this is the case, the MCC Coordinator responsibilities can also include the responsibilities outlined for the Telemedicine Coordinator.

**When there is a Telemedicine Coordinator on site, the MCC Coordinator’s responsibilities may be to:**

- set up, turn on, run and shut down equipment, e.g. computer, camera, microphones
- bring relevant patient information to the MCC, e.g. pathology slides and images
- trouble shoot with the Telemedicine Coordinator, OTN Service Desk, and IT

**Overall, the MCC Coordinator may:**

- facilitate engagement with community hospitals
- provide the relevant information (e.g. meeting date and time, partner sites participating) to the Telemedicine Coordinator/relevant contact
- book the meeting room

#### Hospital Information Technology (IT) Department

The role of IT departments for videoconferencing varies across hospitals. Specialized departments (e.g. multimedia, organizational development) may be involved.

**In general, IT departments may:**

- assist with equipment purchases, installation and support
- ensure there is OTN and internet connectivity
- activate appropriate jacks (e.g. network, phone, data)

#### OTN

OTN Regional Managers can provide a variety of support and services to assist with videoconference MCCs such as:

- support and facilitate telemedicine with members, physicians and allied health care providers
- assist members with increasing and improving telemedicine activities, such as MCCs
- ensure the on-going training needs of members are met

#### Challenges

- IT does not play a role in all hospitals. Getting IT support can be challenging, especially when MCCs occur in the morning or late afternoon, when IT staff may not be on site.
- When partner sites do not have a Telemedicine Coordinator or staff trained on the equipment, organizing a videoconference MCC can be difficult. A Telemedicine Coordinator at a single site may become responsible for assisting with problems/issues that are happening at other sites.

#### Tricks & Tips

- Have the Telemedicine Coordinator take a few minutes to teach others such as MCC Coordinators, physicians and administrative staff about equipment usage, trouble shooting, and common problems. This can make videoconferencing easier at your site.
- Create a regional videoconferencing contact sheet by identifying a contact person for videoconferencing at each hospital. Sharing this information with other hospitals can assist with videoconferencing across the province.

## Education

Education on videoconferencing should include equipment, software usage and videoconference etiquette. Education can happen in several ways:

### OTN

- OTN offers training on scheduling processes, equipment, videoconference etiquette, and other relevant videoconferencing issues
- Connecting with an OTN Regional Manager to discuss equipment can be beneficial. The Regional Manager can recommend appropriate courses and will assist with learning about videoconferencing and the equipment
- The OTN website offers educational documents and lists a variety of online course, e-classes and videoconference sessions
- OTN provides Quick Reference Guides for equipment

### Peer Interaction

- Hands on training from colleagues (e.g. Telemedicine/ MCC Coordinator) who are well versed in videoconferencing can be effective

### Education Manuals

- Equipment comes with manuals that can provide guidance on the functionality of the equipment and troubleshooting

### Equipment Vendors

- Vendors may be able to provide some education on how the equipment works

### Hospital Departments

- Hospital IT or Audio Visual Departments, for example, may play a role in videoconferencing. Contacting a representative from these departments to arrange training may be an option

### Learn As You Go

- Learning by trial and error as problems arise is a common method of learning

## OTN

**A variety of education resources can be found on the OTN website, including:**

- documents describing best practices for education and administrative events
- information documents and quick reference guides for peripheral and videoconference equipment

**Through its e-training centre, OTN also offers:**

- online course sessions available to new members (contact your local Regional Manager to get access to these courses)
- refresher e-classes available to the Telemedicine Coordinator
- site specific training via video
- public resources

### **Note:**

The Regional Managers and other departments throughout OTN can provide direction regarding education resources that would be helpful.

### **Challenges**

- Equipment education sessions offered by OTN are very general. See Tricks & Tips to augment your videoconferencing equipment learning experience.

### **Tricks & Tips**

- Organize a site visit with the OTN Regional Manager to learn more about your videoconference equipment.
- After the equipment is installed, contact OTN to arrange for the appropriate training.
- Create a cheat sheet of common problems and potential solutions. Know the problem areas and how to address them. Share this information with those involved in videoconferencing.
- Bring together Coordinators from the other hospitals who organize videoconference MCCs to discuss related issues.
- Those who are involved in videoconferencing should feel comfortable with the equipment and know what the Telemedicine Coordinator knows. It would be beneficial for Telemedicine Coordinators to teach others about the equipment and help them feel comfortable.
- Distribute the OTN Participant Guidelines and videoconferencing etiquette guidelines to MCC participants which can be found on the OTN website.

## Equipment

**Knowing the right equipment to purchase for your hospital can be challenging. To help with your decision:**

- contact your OTN Regional Manager to complete a site visit and make recommendations for equipment needs (Regional Managers' contact information can be found on the OTN website).
- work with vendors to decide what equipment fits your hospital's needs, room requirements to ensure compatibility with existing equipment.
- ask vendors to complete a needs assessment and propose systems solutions in their quotes
- consult your IT department
- consult physicians that attend MCCs to determine any current issues and identify their needs
- determine the available budget

<p><b><u>Room Requirements</u></b> Meeting rooms should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure all participants can be seen on camera</li> <li>• be equipped with appropriate jacks (e.g. network, phone, data)</li> <li>• be well ventilated for equipment</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Videoconference and IT Equipment</u></b> Equipment used for videoconferencing includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TV Monitor to view pathology and radiology images, and people at other sites</li> <li>• laptop or desktop to share PowerPoint or images (one is fine)</li> <li>• speaker system (not impacted by feedback noise)</li> <li>• camera and microphone(s)</li> <li>• projector (LCD)</li> <li>• teleconference unit</li> <li>• microscope (not required)</li> <li>• videoconference remote control</li> <li>• cables and extension cords</li> <li>• extra batteries and adaptors</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When purchasing equipment, make sure that it is all compatible and on the OTN Technical Service Level Agreement (TSLA).</li> <li>• Work with your OTN Regional Manager to help choose equipment that meets your organization's needs.</li> <li>• Research the value of High Definition equipment and ask about the pros &amp; cons.</li> <li>• Two television screens may be beneficial to toggle between images and participants.</li> <li>• Having a computer to display pathology slides and another for images can be effective.</li> <li>• Computers should have fast processing speed, the ability to project PACs, run various software, and have high imaging resolution quality. A VGA card may be beneficial.</li> <li>• Imaging resolution should be compatible with OTN systems (600x800 or 1024 x 768).</li> <li>• A document camera may be useful to view non-scanned paper documents.</li> <li>• A touch screen may allow for easy transitioning between equipment .</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Installation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors, independent companies and sometimes IT departments install/set up, and test videoconference equipment. Basic training can sometimes be provided</li> <li>• IT department needs to ensure that the appropriate jacks are configured for OTN and working properly.</li> <li>• Contact OTN to have the equipment OTN certified and tested.</li> <li>• Facilities departments may assist in ensuring that the equipment is in place.</li> <li>• Equipment can be installed in one room or be on a mobile cart, so that the equipment can be moved around to different rooms within the hospital.</li> <li>• Some hospitals have a Multimedia Department that can be responsible for videoconference equipment.</li> <li>• OTN's New Site Team can guide you through the New Site and installation processes; contact your Regional Manager for more information.</li> </ul>
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### OTN

- The OTN Technical Level Service Agreement (<http://www.otn.ca/en/members/resource-library>) describes services provided to members; roles, responsibilities and expectations of OTN and its members; and defines the quality criteria by which OTN manages its service offerings. It includes a list of standard and partially supported equipment. OTN has a Vendor of Record with Tandberg and Telus (Polycom solution), and can obtain quotes on behalf of OTN members. The final purchasing decision resides with the member. Equipment spec sheets are available that illustrate various types of equipment and provides product information.
- To learn more about equipment and what best suits the needs of the hospital, contact the local Regional Manager.

#### Challenges

- Not knowing the type of videoconference equipment system to purchase

#### Tricks & Tips

- Blackberries may interfere with videoconference systems.
- A wireless system may not be reliable for projecting images.
- Keep an equipment database for recent purchases and equipment pros and cons. Share this with Coordinators from other Regions to help with their equipment purchases.
- Research videoconference equipment and be involved in the equipment purchase to help inform the decision on what to buy.
- Showing split screens of the participants and the case presentation information can make the MCC more effective.

## Troubleshooting

**Troubleshooting with videoconference equipment can be accomplished in a variety of ways. To troubleshoot:**

- use trial and error at first to try to navigate through problems
- contact the onsite Telemedicine Coordinator (if applicable) for assistance
- contact the OTN help desk at 1-866-454-6861 to work through issues. OTN can connect to the system to help with troubleshooting. Have your site and system information readily available as well as the TSM/Event ID number, when calling the Service Desk.

### Hospital Information Technology (IT) Department

The role IT departments play in troubleshooting varies across hospitals.

**In general, IT can be contacted when there are problems with:**

- the functionality of the videoconference equipment (varies across hospitals)
- the functionality of the IT equipment (e.g. computer)
- OTN connectivity (may differ among sites)

\*Some hospitals have an Organizational Development Department in place to assist with videoconference equipment and troubleshooting. Biomedicine departments may be responsible for the functionality of microscopes.

### OTN

- The OTN Service Desk is the basic point of contact for troubleshooting (1-866-454-6861).
- There are different OTN departments that provide assistance to resolve issues (e.g. scheduling team would deal with scheduling software issues).
- For additional information contact your local Regional Manager
- Note: An integrated boardroom is not supported by OTN. If difficulties are experienced within this type of boardroom, the OTN Service Desk would only be able to assist with the unit's functionality.

### Challenges

- When IT problems occur, IT staff are often not on site because of the time the MCC is held (e.g. early in the morning or later in the afternoon). If there is emergency IT support staff on call, their ability to resolve an IT issue after a call has been made may be difficult, as the MCC may already be over.
- Some IT departments charge a fee for after hours support.

### Tricks & Tips

- Ideal to have a Telemedicine Coordinator at each partner site. Call Telemedicine Coordinators at partner sites to discuss problems that occurred during the videoconference.
- Make a cheat sheet of common problems, errors and resolution tips. Post it in the videoconference room or keep it near the equipment.
- Post the OTN Service Desk number on the equipment.
- Create a best practices data base that outlines common errors, problems and solutions for the equipment being used.
- Have the Telemedicine Coordinator teach MCC Coordinators, MCC participants and administrative staff about the equipment.
- Talk with your IT department to understand support coverage. Develop a plan for support outside of peak hours.

### Contacts:

- To find out more information about OTN and a list of OTN Regional Managers and their portfolios, please visit the OTN website (<http://www.otn.ca/>) or contact: 1-866-454-OTN1 (6861)
- To contact a MCC Coordinator at a hospital in your region regarding MCCs, please email: [mccinfo@cancercare.on.ca](mailto:mccinfo@cancercare.on.ca)