

NEWS RELEASE

Under embargo until Tuesday Nov. 6th at 1 p.m. EST

B.Y.O.D. – Bring Your Own Device – Health Care

TORONTO, ON, November 6, 2014– A new healthcare system that ends fragmented care and puts patients at the centre of an integrated network of care is as close as your smartphone, according to Dr. Ed Brown.

Dr. Brown, CEO of the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), told The Canadian Club of Toronto today that we have the opportunity to create a system that integrates information technology into health care the way it has already been integrated into banking and retail and travel.

“What you already know how to do on your smartphone will be a fundamental part of your health care,” he said. “Consumers and patients out there are more than ready for this kind of change. We know that at least 75% of consumers want to connect to their healthcare providers electronically.

“The majority of people already own their future telemedicine device. They are already connected and ready to BYOD – bring your own device.”

Dr. Brown said telemedicine offers Ontario – for the first time – the opportunity to create a sustainable healthcare system that provides the right care at the right time in the right place.

“Telemedicine is the only way to achieve an equitable, effective, efficient and sustainable healthcare system,” he said.

“The rapid proliferation of these tools and the public’s readiness to use them means our vision of a patient-centred system suddenly feels practical and attainable. We have been handed a license to create a better system at a cost we can afford.”

He said OTN’s job is to advance telemedicine solutions and to inspire adoption by healthcare providers, organizations and the public.

The major stressor of our current system, he said, is our aging population. About 85 per cent of the population over 45 has at least one chronic disease.

(more)

“We know a lot more now than we did back in the 1960s when we created a health insurance system focused on acute care that paid for episodic visits to doctors and hospitals. Now we know that chronic disease is not well-served and too costly in that model. And there’s a lot more chronic disease than there used to be.”

Through telemedicine, more care will take place in the community than in hospital. People burdened with chronic disease now have the tools to manage their health in their own homes.

“Necessity and opportunity have arrived together. We have a universally shared vision of an affordable, patient-centric system. We have the technology to do it. The patients are ready.”

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Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN)

The world leader in telemedicine, OTN helps Ontarians get more out of the healthcare system by 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 healthcare process, while also expanding the way knowledge is shared and how the medical community interacts with each other and with patients. An independent, not-for-profit organization, OTN is funded by the Government of Ontario.

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For more information about Ontario Telemedicine Network visit www.otn.ca

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