



SHANDONG TELEMEDICINE CENTER

TELEMEDICINE DELIVERS CRITICAL MEDICAL CARE AND KNOWLEDGE TO RURAL CHINA

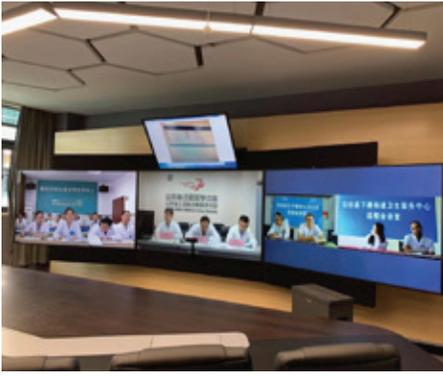
The delivery of timely, quality, and specialized healthcare to rural populations is a challenge worldwide. This challenge is felt acutely in China, the most populous country in the world. In addition to the sheer number of people, there are vast rural expanses of the country where residents have little to no access to healthcare. In recent years, this has led to a significant expansion of telemedicine initiatives. Idata Research expects China to outpace the rest of the world in the use of telemedicine in just a few years.

ABOUT

Shandong Telemedicine Center is at the forefront of telemedicine innovation in China. Established in 1998, the center is affiliated with the Shandong Provincial Hospital and facilitates more than 10,000 cases of telemedicine services each year. Currently, there are more than 600 hospitals in the network, including 530 from within the province, 70 from other provinces, and 2,120 township health clinic centers. The network also provides more than 50 educational telemedicine sessions per year, resulting in tens of thousands of trainees.

SOLUTIONS

Poly telemedicine solutions are the backbone of the Shandong network and enable not only traditional telemedicine, but also distance education, academic discussion, and real-time surgical observation and guidance. The network includes a combination of video solutions ranging from video software applications, to endpoints designed to meet the needs of medium-to-large conference rooms, to immersive telepresence. Poly seamlessly handles audio and video bridging, device management, call-signal processing, firewall traversal, and streaming.



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- Zhang Xiyu, Director of Shandong Telemedicine Center

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Poly beat competing solutions on several fronts, not the least of which was its reputation in the telemedicine industry.

“Not only does Poly enjoy significant market share in healthcare, it offers open compatibility in the medical industry, enabling it to communicate with telemedicine systems in various regions,” explains Xiyu.

High-network adaptivity, low-bandwidth occupation, and network stability also gave Poly an edge over competitors. Add the quality of Poly high-definition audio and video conferencing and timely professional service support, and it was an easy decision for Shandong Province.

RESULTS

The Poly-powered telemedicine network is having an impact on the quality and timeliness of care for patients throughout this eastern Chinese province. The Shandong Telemedicine Center has delivered to rural populations the face-to-face consultations with specialists that are key to improving outcomes. But the innovation didn't stop there. Physicians are able in real time to access and share medical records, a host of medical images, and electrocardiograms during remote consultations.

Multidisciplinary consultations involving many hospitals and experts are also now a reality thanks to the telemedicine network. In complex medical cases, the importance of access to a team of specialists cannot be overstated. Consultations can also be recorded and archived as a way to evaluate care improvement.

Physicians are benefiting from the telemedicine network through vastly improved access to medical education. Distance learning and academic discussion have been high priorities for Shandong Provincial and today lectures are broadcast over the network at least every two weeks. Live broadcasts of surgical operations and the opportunity to participate in hospital rounds remotely are also boosting physician competence in the region. In addition, surgical teaching and remote operation guidance has been enabled through operating room cameras and surgical field cameras.

“When physicians have consistent access to medical education, it raises the standard of care for the entire region,” says Xiyu.

Shandong Telemedicine Center also coordinates with the executive council of the national health and family planning commission to expand and enhance communication around policy.

PATH FORWARD

Based on the ongoing challenge of delivering healthcare to China's most remote regions, Shandong Telemedicine Center anticipates continued growth of its network. Immediate plans include a greater reliance on Poly Professional Services and a move to Poly cloud solutions for unified device management and analytics of telemedicine investments on a larger scale.