



**Workshop:  
Communication and ICT in Healthcare:  
Theory and Practice**

**The Impact of Structuring Multidisciplinary Team Conferences  
Mediated by ICT in the Treatment of Patients with Rheumatic  
Diseases**

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**Abstract**

Team conferences, in which health professionals from various disciplines involved in the treatment of patients participate, play a crucial role in multidisciplinary treatment process. During team conferences the following tasks have to be performed:

- (a) Exchange of information about the patient's health status as assessed by different health professionals,
- (b) Mutual agreement about team goals to be set and evaluation and adaptation of treatment goals during the treatment,
- (c) Planning and co-ordination of interventions deriving from the treatment goals.

From the literature and daily practice it appeared that staff satisfaction with team conferences where no overt structuring of these tasks is used, is generally low [1].

Literature shows evidence that the use of a tool for structuring team conferences, such as the Rehabilitation Activities Profile Team (RAP-TEAM), has positive effects on staff satisfaction [2].

We will present a case study where the RAP-TEAM tool and matching multidisciplinary electronic record was introduced in a multidisciplinary team care setting, the Rehabilitation Clinic of the Rheumatology Department of the Leiden University Medical Center in The Netherlands.

The process of introducing the RAP-TEAM along with introducing ICT as a supporting technology for these team conferences will be discussed, as well as the expected effects on the quality of the team conferences, based on a theory of communication processes.

This case study will provide more insight into the impact of the ICT-based reorganisation regarding its effect on the quality of the communication process during team conferences.

**References**

1. Jelles F, Bennekom CAM van, Lankhorst GJ. Instruments to structure interdisciplinary team conferences in rehabilitation medicine: added value of the Rehabilitation Activities Profile. *Journal of Rehabilitation Sciences* 1995, vol. 8 (2); pp. 51-58.
2. Jelles F, Bennekom CAM van, Lankhorst GJ, Bouter LM. Staff satisfaction with team conferences: development of a questionnaire. *Clinical Rehabilitation* 1996, 10; pp. 47-55.

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