

# International Maritime Health Association



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## WORKSHOP ON TELEMEDICINE Rome, 18 - 19<sup>th</sup> May 2002

This workshop was organized in co-operation with the "Centro Internazionale Radio Medico (C.I.R.M.)". We had plenty of attendants (56), 24 of them participated as speakers.

Main subjects were:

- ❖ update in telemedicine technology,
- ❖ relation between Radio-Medical Advice Centres and ship owners,
- ❖ experiences of European telemedicine centres (Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Croatia, Georgia and Italy),
- ❖ perspectives, regulations and specific issues (thrombolysis and helicopters, satellite & cruise ships, ECG on board the Survcard experience in France, evaluation of protocols etc).

Main conclusions:

1. The best possibilities for treating diseases or accidents on board are: to provide medical advice via tele-communications systems, to guarantee adequate training of personnel with the responsibility of health care on board and to have an adequate supply of drugs and essential medical equipment (ship's medicine chest).
2. Technology is now available for transmitting several types of medical information. The problem is that most of this technology is not cheap and/or not easily usable on board ships. An update of on-board telecommunication systems and more experience and research on the field, can contribute to move into practical and affordable solutions also for not-passenger ships.
3. In spite of different experiences and organization of European Telemedicine Centres all agreed to consider some specific initiatives of collaboration and joint activities. If pursued together they will contribute to increase standards of health care on board ship and to convey daily medical assistance activity of each institution into an integrated system for increased quality of technology used for assisting seafarers.
4. IMHA emphasized its interest in supporting maritime telemedicine initiatives and in working in collaboration with telemedicine centres for co-ordinating actions in the fields of interest. A working forum, can serve for proposing documents and exchange of opinions between telemedicine centres. Drs. Flesche and Amenta will work for proposing a first draft document.

Future contacts for considering specific initiatives and activities in the field of maritime telemedicine will follow. If pursued together they will contribute to increase standards of health care on board ships and to increase quality of technology used for assisting seafarers.

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