From Ship to Shore: "Telemedicine at the Deckplates" The Telemedicine Multimedia Integrated Distribute Network (MIDN) Project

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MIDN is an Military Health Services System (MHSS) telemedicine project to enhance the operational and training readiness of active duty members by making specialty care available at medical clinics on land and the deckplates at sea. In fiscal year 1996 (FY96), telemedicine links were established and exercised between the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, MD, the Naval Medical Clinic at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, the USS George Washington, USS Enterprise, and USS T. Roosevelt battlegroups, and the Branch Medical Clinics at Arlington Annex, Dahlgren, VA, and Sugar Grove, WV. Clinical teleconsultations with this initial set of participating commands are providing opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of telemedicine over a broad range of modalities and specialties

associated with acute care delivery and the physical examination process. Implementation of the FY96 phase I core system focused on the interface of commercial and government off-the-shelf telecommunication and clinical workstation equipment and software with the Composite Health Care System. A preliminary report will be provided regarding the establishment of a Telemedicine Department at NNMC, the re-engineering of business practices, electronic data handling, and storage, which is an ongoing process at each MIDN site. Existing clinical data dictionary elements developed for the Akamai project and other new business practice developments at NNMC are being leveraged to promote standardization and to reduce the cost of development. In addition, network management and control procedures using Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), Asynchronous Transfer Network (ATM), and Internet protocols are being developed within an operational environment to ensure reliable telecommunications. Additional sites and increased functionality are programmed for FY97 and FY98 with the goal of producing an operationally validated design for a low-cost military medical workstation in 3 years and concurrently promoting improved health care delivery at each MIDN clinical site.

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