

Utilization of Ontario eConsult by Primary Care Providers in Correctional Facilities

Trillium PHC Research Day

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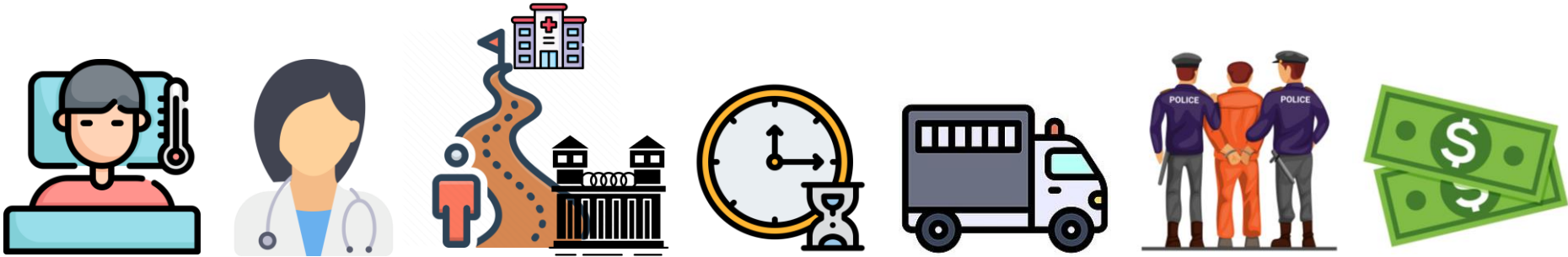


Conflict of Interest

- No conflicts of interest to disclose, real or perceived

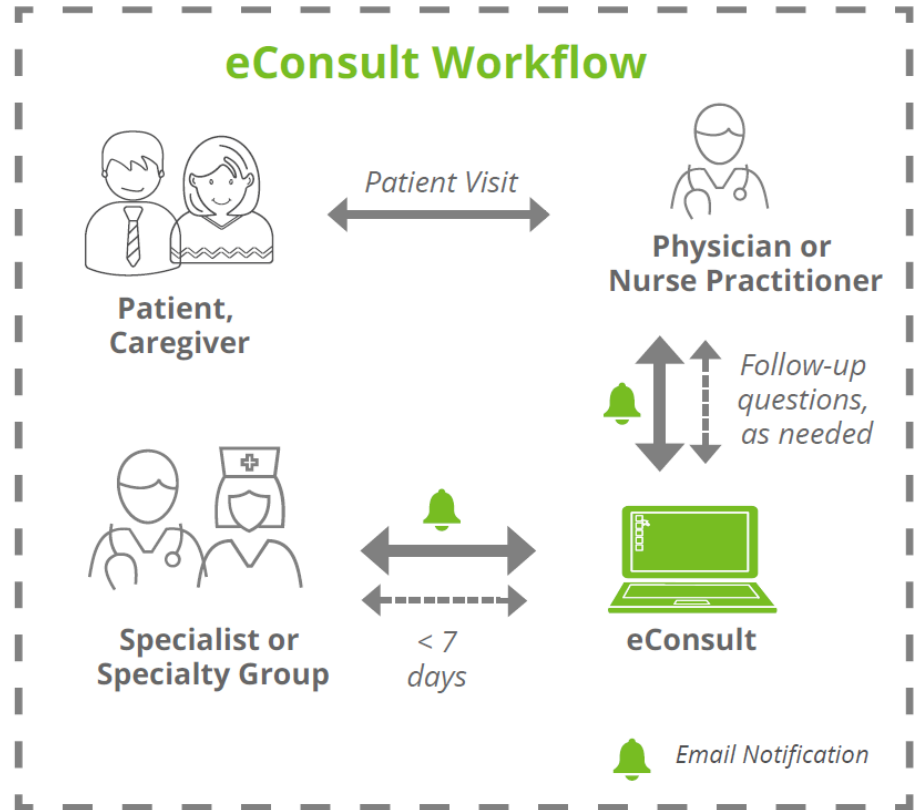
Background

- Let's go on a journey of an incarcerated person with healthcare needs...



What is eConsult?

Electronic consult (eConsult) is a secure web-based tool that allows physicians or nurse practitioners to engage in an electronic dialogue with specialists to receive timely access to specialist advice for *all* patients, often without the need for an in-person patient visit with a specialist.

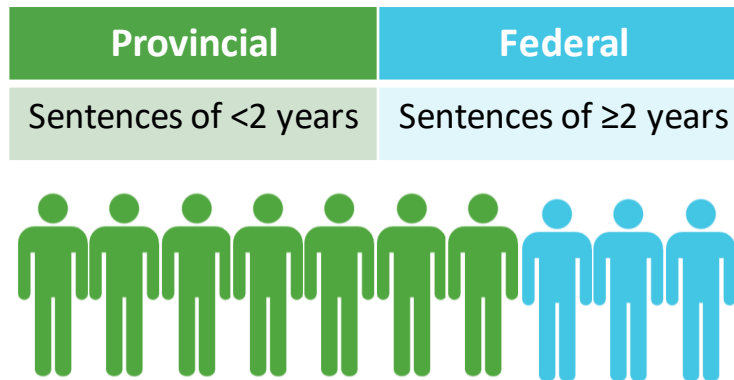


Objective

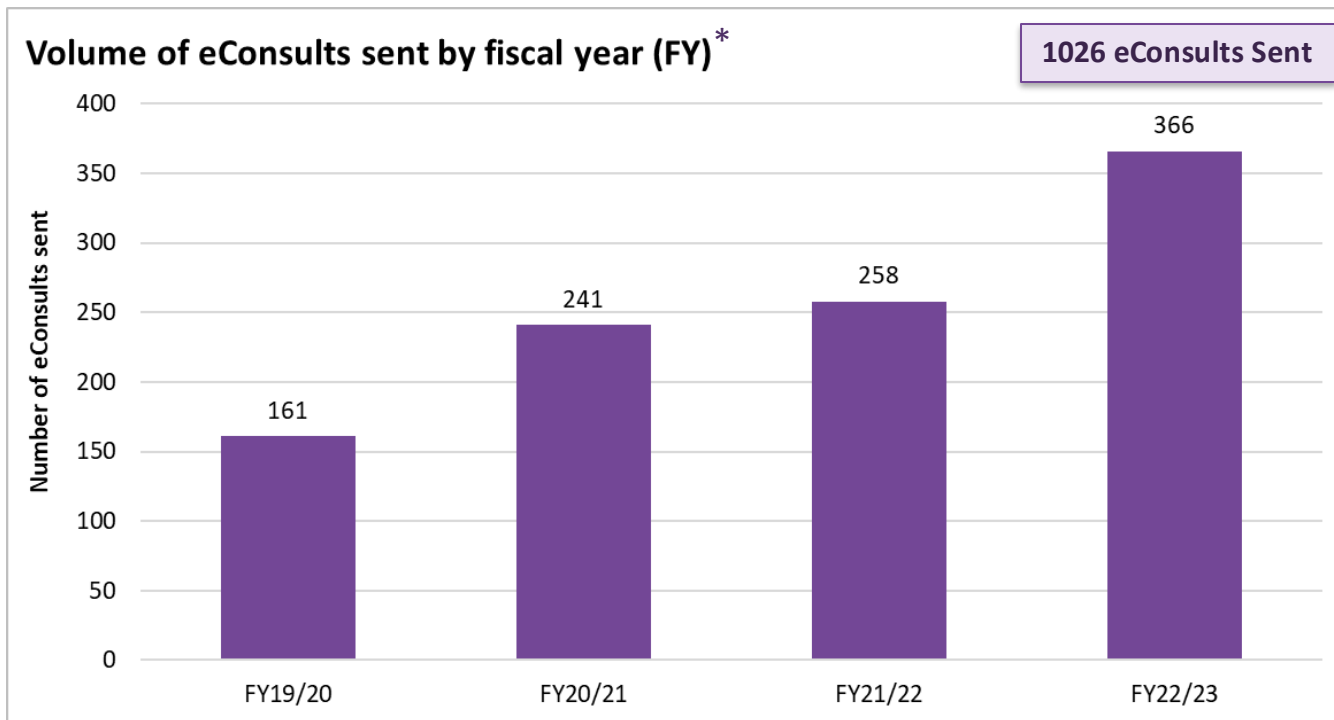
- Can Ontario eConsult be used to improve access to specialist care for incarcerated persons in Ontario?

Methods

- Setting: Federal and provincial correctional facilities in Ontario
- Participants: 1026 eConsults through the Ontario eConsult Service
- Timeframe: April 1st, 2019 to March 31st, 2023
- Analysis: Cross-sectional descriptive analysis

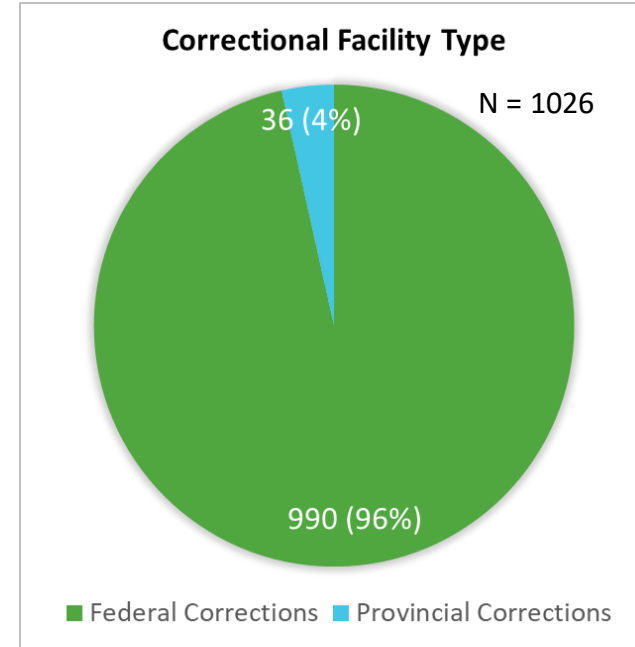


eConsult Volume Results



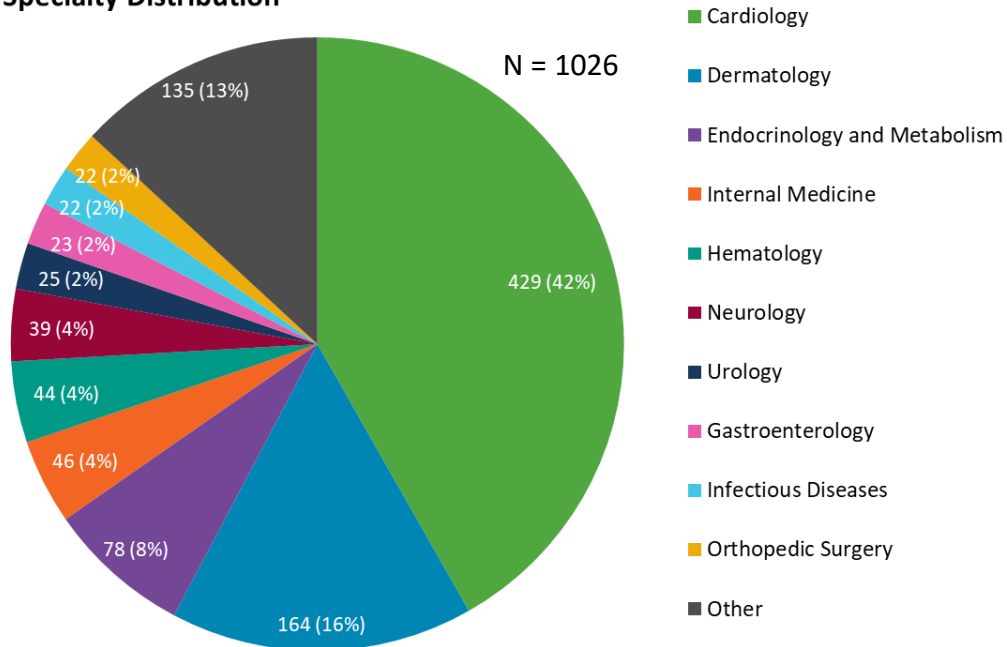
Federal & Provincial Corrections Results

Fiscal Year	Federal Corrections eConsults/1000 incarcerated people	Provincial Corrections eConsults/1000 incarcerated people
21/22	71.8	2.2
22/23	105.0	1.7



Specialty Distribution & Time Spent Results

Specialty Distribution

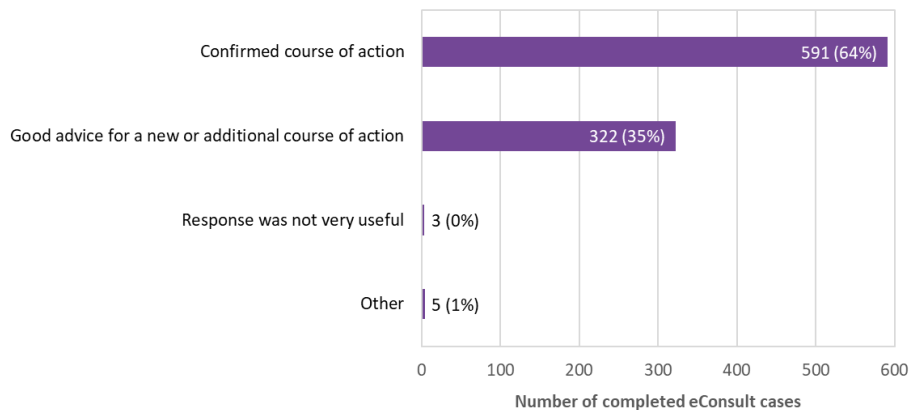


Indicator	Mean *	Median *
Response Interval	2.0 days	0.9 days
% of cases sent with response time <7 days	95%	
% of cases sent with response time <30 days	100%	
Time Spent	14.9 min	15.0 min
Cost per Case	\$49.50	\$50.00

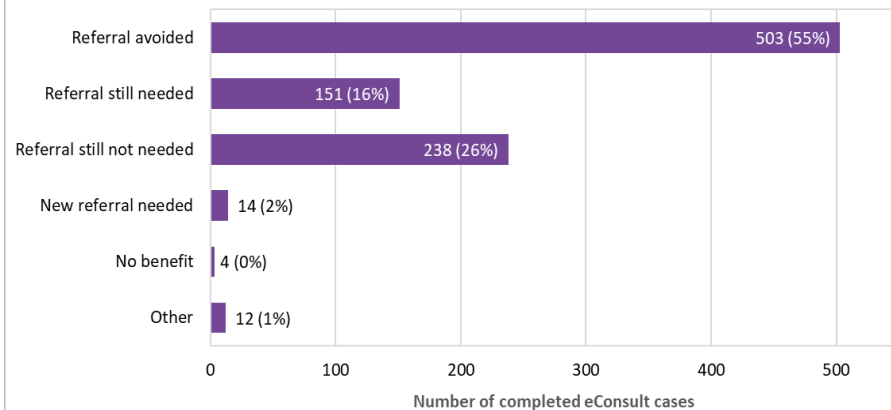
*Based on 937 closed cases

Sender Close-Out Survey Results

Impact of eConsult on PCP Course of Action



Impact of eConsult on Need for Face-to-Face Referral



N = 921

Discussion

- Increase in eConsults sent with simultaneous decrease in admissions to correctional services and average counts of individuals in custody in Ontario^{2,3,4}
- Cardiology top specialty
 - Cardiologists' guidance regarding cardiac testing for incarcerated people undergoing opioid agonist treatment (OAT) for treating opioid use disorder
 - 765 incarcerated people in federal custody in Ontario are undergoing OAT, while an additional 11 remain on the waitlist¹⁰

Conclusion & Next Steps

- This tool:
 1. Reduces the need for face-to-face referrals
 2. Eliminates unnecessary transportation with potential security concerns
- Serves as a template for broader implementation in similar institutionalized settings
- Next steps:
 1. Economic analysis to evaluate the cost savings and benefits of eConsult
 2. Explore types of questions being asked by PCPs in correctional facilities

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Thank you!

Questions?

