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Topic: S01 - Symposium 01: The tele-therapy town - what's happening to the neighbourhood?

The Shadow of the Electronic World On Patients & Healthcare Systems - a Global Perspective

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With justification doctors and patients across the world have looked at technology to provide answers and make improve health. Whether it has been the promise of devices, of magnetic mesmerism, or of new processes and behavioural change, such as the hygienic advances of Semelweiss or Nightingale, physicians and consumers have welcomed and disparaged paradigm shifting developments.

Over the 25 years of the world wide web, the internet and remote technologies have transformed the delivery of health care. In the consumption of knowledge or the provision of information that empowers consumers and carers, opportunities thrive. Many have seen this New Age of Enlightenment as ripe with potential. Many speakers and symposia have described the excellent work that the internet has enabled. Its potential for good is undeniable.

However with the easy transfer of data, the gathering of huge amounts of intelligence, there lies a potential for abuse. Organizations have harnessed the power of computing to influence individuals, to get them to make choices they would not normally make. With the bright light cast by search engines, there is a shadow. We shall look at this dichotomy, the darkness that accompanies this good; at what are the threats to the new frontier and releasing the untold benefits it could bring.