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INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON GLOBAL HEALTHCARE

May12, 2021 | Webinar

Using space technology as a remedy for diseases caused by environmental factors

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Problem Statement: Patients with community/environmental-acquired diseases (e.g. pneumonia, cellulitis, urinary-tract infection) may be treated in hospital or as outpatients, depending on severity. Modern-tool like telemedicine/telehealth, using space-technology have now come-in handy to address issues of disease-surveillance, control-checking, and evaluation.Methodological&Theoretical orientation: Telemedicine at home is used to monitor patients who would normally be hospitalized, and its potential to positively-influence the environment on a worldwide-scale is becoming a reality reaching those never benefited from modern-healthcare practices. Telemedicine is useable as vector-control strategy and surveillance, perspectives on diagnosis, treatment and control of diseases caused by environmental-factor. It's possible through satellite-remote-sensing technique/Geographic-Information-System enabling surveillance of environmental-conditions for vector-development and disease-transmission; providing information on epidemiology of a region. Such applications in the environmental-factor disease elimination program also have the potential to lessen geographical-disparities, to simplify access to resources, diagnosis, and the knowledge of scarce-specialists; synergizing health centers at local, national and international-levels; and integrating multifaceted intervention and personnel.Findings:Patients treated with telemedicine have satisfactory clinical-outcomes; recovery appearing more-rapid; and resulting in considerable-savings by averting/shortening hospitals stays. Of primary-concern to environmentalists is the greenhouse gases (GHG) emission eliminated in relation to healthcare prevented in patient-travel, hospital-visitors, ambulances, laboratory-delivery, pick-up etc. Traveling to the emergency-room, rehabilitation-facilities, or doctor's-office for follow-up; environmental-diseases from GHG; and all the cumulative-energy all avoidable. Telemedicine linking the patient and doctor makes: fewer-buildings required, more efficient-use of hospital space, smaller waiting-rooms, and fewer examination-rooms, eliminate travel-costs, reduce accidents while traveling etc.
Conclusion & Significance: With environmental-management, disease causing vectors could be greatly reduced/ eradicated. Telemedicine-technology: can help co-ordinate strategies to bridge the gap between people and programmer (tele-education, tele-training), especially through video-conferencing; and offers environmental-education and protection to rural people which can aid in destroying disease-vectors habitats. Telemedicine benefits are no longer confined to increasing-access and improving patient-outcomes but a prominent-contributor towards conserving the environment, lowering the carbon-footprint of the health-industry against climate-change.

Biography

Funmilola Oluwafemi is a Space Bio-Scientist, the Astrobiology Unit Head and the Leading Expert of Microgravity Research at the Space Agency of Nigeria – National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA), Abuja, Nigeria. She is an educationist, researcher, teacher, writer, and counselor on space matters, who's also a winner of several moral and academic awards with publications in several reputable journals and magazines.

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