

# AN ASSESSMENT OF TELEMEDICINE POSSIBILITIES IN MASSIVE CASUALTIES SITUATIONS

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The use of existing possibilities of Telemedicine Center of Kaunas University of Medicine allows the live (on-line) distant consultations from high-level medical specialised centers to rural areas. In order to expand the use of distant consultations facilities is essential to apply its possibilities in large mass casualty events, decreasing geographical isolation of event place.

- On 23 and 28 July 2004 the Telemedicine Center took part in the RESCUER/MEDCEUR project exercise. **RESCUER/MEDCEUR 2004** is a USAREUR led "In the Spirit of Partnership for Peace" (ISO PFP) Exercise designed to train US, NATO, and Partner nations, to respond to a disaster relief/mass casualty situation. 320 soldiers from 12 countries, namely Lithuania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, United States of America, Croatia, Latvia, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine, took part in the RESCUER/MEDCEUR 2004 exercises, alongside the 6 observers from the Netherlands, Poland, Luxemburg, and Germany.

Telemedicine Center used appropriate telecommunication devices (Satellite, ISDN, IP) for joint activities of civil and multinational military services in critical situations such as mass casualty events.

- On 28 July, the final and most intensive day of the anti-terrorism drills, the multinational force of medics at the Kairiu Training Range in Lithuania reacted to a large mass casualty event – treating hundreds of victims from a simulated train crash. On the place of event the Telemedicine Center arranged live, direct high level medical multispecialists teleconsultations from Kaunas Medical University Hospital. The most complicated initiated cases of eye trauma, neurosurgical trauma, maxilloface trauma and traumatic amputation of limbs evaluated and selected by Kaunas Medical University Hospital specialists at the event place using telemedicine facilities. All those cases transported to Kaunas and Vilnius Universities Hospitals by helicopters (200 and 300 km from the event place).



The use of existing telemedicine infrastructure shows the possibilities of the military medicine personnel's capability to provide medical service for the casualties, as well as their ability to cooperate with the civil institution during the rescue operations.

These results show the facilities of existing telemedicine infrastructure and needs for further development of existing system into International Integrated eHealth Network for very fast international exchange of medical information, remote consultations of high skilled specialists in emergent or a large mass casualty events from the best European civil and military medical centers and distant education.

