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Pennsylvania Dermatologist Wins PAMED Innovators Contest for Teledermatology Efforts

To spark innovation sharing, the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) held a contest to collect and share ways physicians are innovating in their practices. Stephen Schleicher, MD, drawn at random, was the winner of an Apple iPad2. His entry focused on his efforts with teledermatology.

For Dr. Schleicher, teledermatology is a way to reach those who might not have access to a dermatologist. For patients in underserved areas with a shortage of dermatologists, teledermatology provides access to care to help fight skin cancer and other skin diseases.

"Teledermatology has afforded me the personal satisfaction of diagnosing and treating thousands of individuals who, until now, lacked access to dermatologic care," said Dr. Schleicher.

A growing movement in dermatology, teledermatology can be through a live video consultation or the more popular "store and forward," in which images and text are emailed to the dermatologist for review.

Dr. Schleicher has been involved in teledermatology since 1999 and currently works with 28 Pennsylvania prisons diagnosing prisoners' skin conditions remotely. He also has been asked to work with several out-of-state correctional facilities.

Dr. Schleicher was recently honored with the esteemed title of laureate from the 2011 Computerworld Honors Program for a study he completed titled "Teledermatology for an Underserved Population," which focused on how teledermatology can improve access to care. This international program recognizes individuals who have used information technology to promote positive social, economic, and educational change, improving public welfare and benefiting society.

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