



**Background:** Health Experts online Portal (HELP) is a secure web-based, teleconsultation system started by Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP), in June 2014. Naval Medical Center Portsmouth serves as the DoD's tertiary medical care facility for Navy Medicine East Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) in the eastern United States, EUCOM, CENTCOM, AFRICOM, SOUTHCOM and their regionally associated Fleet and Marine assets. Many of these MTFs have limited or no access to local specialty consultation services. This vast region spans 10 time zones, making real-time synchronous teleconsultation impractical. This unique medical and geographic situation created the need for asynchronous teleconsultation capabilities. HELP is based upon an existing, tested, and proven teleconsultation program, Pacific Asynchronous TeleHealth (PATH) System. PATH was established at Tripler Army Medical Center since 2000.

**System Description:** HELP is a web-based, asynchronous (store-&-forward), HIPAA-compliant platform used for provider-to-provider teleconsultation, patient movement, and case management. The HELP website allows remote providers to submit patient demographics, clinical data, and supplementary multimedia as dictated by the clinical scenario. Consultations are screened by consult managers and forwarded to the appropriate subspecialist, DWMMC or Fleet liaison for input. All case discussion is done on the web-based platform, with notification of new case activity sent via HIPAA-compliant e-mail.

## Health Experts online Portal (HELP) System FY19

93,161 Cases viewed, 29,834 Interactions,  
1,361 Active users

- 583 HELP specialists in 91 subspecialties.
- 57 ships and over 75 Medical Treatment Facilities enrolled.
- Median consult response time: 006 hours.
- 86% of consults responded to within 24 hours.
- HELP prevented 444 medevacs and 214 network deferrals, with a total cost saving of 6,655,001.
- HELP is available to MD's, GMO's, IDC's, FS's, UMO's, NP's, PA's, and Psychologists.

**Effectiveness/System Impact:** HELP is based on the Pacific Asynchronous TeleHealth (PATH) system, which first demonstrated improved healthcare access and quality with significant cost savings (Arch Ped Adol Med 2005 & Telemedicine and e-Health 2011). HELP's Annual Report for 2018, demonstrates continual improvement in access and quality of care, while showing a total of \$6,655,001 in cost saving. Other associated benefits include HIPAA-compliance, case documentation uploaded in the patient's electronic health record, workload credit for HUB specialty providers answering consultants, reduced testing, improved patient movement request coordination, and provision of continuing education to remote healthcare providers. All submitted requests are monitored by HUB consult managers, to ensure case response time within 24 to 72 hours.

**Patient Movement Functionality:** Patient movement function was activated in February 2015, to allow outside MTFs, the Fleet, and Mobilized Medical Units improved visibility on their patient's transition to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), HELP's OCONUS Sub-Hub site or CONUS facilities. The system allows a request for information in a secure and HIPAA-compliant format, for continuous situational awareness for consults, appointments, patient arrival MEDEVAC'd facilities and TPMRC-E collaboration.

To request a HELP System account: <https://help.nmcp.med.navy.mil>

### Contact Information

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