

ATA and International Telemedicine A Report of the ATA International Task Force

The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) is the world's leading telemedicine organization. The ATA has grown in stature, internationally, since its inception. The Association's reach is reflective of its member's needs and interests. The Association serves as the foundation for exchange, collaboration, and sharing of knowledge that is all encompassing. These attributes can provide, at an international level, an understanding of telemedicine and its capabilities. The increase in participation in the ATA annual meeting and Association membership reflects an international presence. Current membership of ATA includes over 225 individuals located outside of the U.S.

The Task Force's recommendations are two fold: 1) helping U.S.-based healthcare institutions and industry to better understand and become involved with telemedicine activities outside of the U.S. and 2) interacting with leaders of telemedicine initiatives in other parts of the world in order to promote its expansion globally.

ATA, through the knowledge and expertise of its members and staff, has much to share with those outside the U.S. Identification of appropriate networking solutions, technology, processes and protocols can be gleaned from the ATA membership. Of equal importance, the experience of other countries and regions has generated expertise and knowledge that can prove helpful here.

The Task Force has drafted a number of potential activities for consideration of the Association. We fully understand the limitations of ATA to expend additional funds or staff time on new initiatives. Therefore, we are also looking at ways in which the membership of ATA, working through the International Special Interest Group (SIG), can play an active role in carrying out some of these activities in coordination with the leadership of the Association.