

Camera phones can be a valuable tool for remote diagnosis and (peer) education

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Camera phones may be the future for assistance in medical diagnosis, especially in remote areas, according to a new study published Dec. 14 in the online journal *PLoS ONE*.

The researchers, led by Coosje Tuijn of the Royal Tropical Institute in the Netherlands, conducted a feasibility study in Uganda and showed that a 2 [megapixel camera](#) was sufficient to capture a clear microscopy image that could be sent to a website for confirmation and additional analysis by a specialist. The specialist could then provide feedback by means of a text message.

With some further system optimization, doctors may soon be able to take advantage of this virtual network to adequately help more patients in less time, which would be particularly valuable in remote and sparsely populated areas. Such technological advances could "improve diagnosis in peripheral health settings by empowering undereducated and insufficiently experienced health care and laboratory workers to meet quality standards", says Dr. Tuijn.

More information: Tuijn CJ, Hoefman BJ, van Beijma H, Oskam L, Chevrollier N (2011) Data and Image Transfer Using Mobile Phones to Strengthen Microscopy-Based Diagnostic Services in Low and Middle Income Country Laboratories. *PLoS ONE* 6(12): e28348.

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