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Key concepts for managing risk and quality in telehealth services

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Problem faced by users of ISO standards for telehealth

A minimal set of concepts or a framework for use of ISO standards relevant to telehealth service, would be very useful given the increasingly complex set of standards, guidelines and codes that have become available.

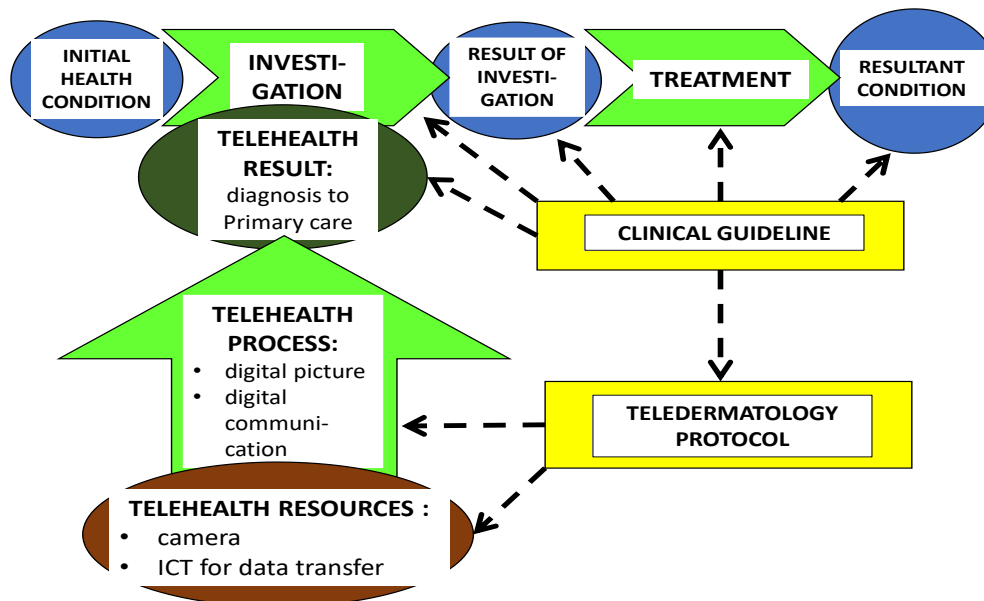


Questions

- 1. What are the key management concepts that should be applied when integrating telehealth services into a quality management system that complies with the ISO 9001 standards?
- 2. Using such a set of key concepts, can a unifying framework for quality management of telehealth services be constructed?



Process: Understand the use case





Interpreting the use case

What makes an investigation successful? How is its quality judged?

- A key quality characteristic for teledermatology services is the appropriateness of healthcare activities that is whether the appropriate activities have been undertaken.
- Other important quality characteristics are accountability, continuity, effectiveness, efficiency, safety and transparency.



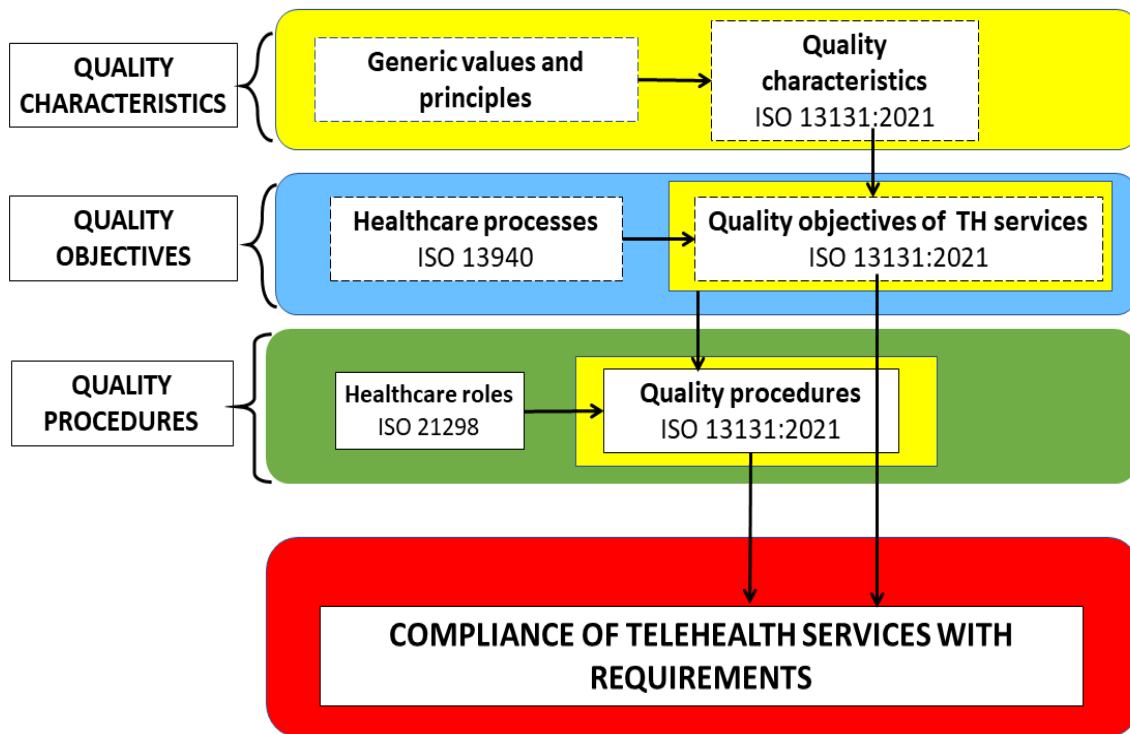
Key concepts: The Quality Triad

The generic quality triad employed in ISO 13131 comprises:

1. Quality characteristics, including generic values and principles
2. Quality objectives, including needs assessment and required standard of care
3. Quality procedures to be undertaken by health care actors with specific roles and responsibilities.



The Quality Triad





Applying the Quality Triad

In the teledermatology use case, the criteria (**quality objectives**) for referrals from the regional dermatology center to the hospital should be agreed between these two organizations as part of a service level agreement containing **quality procedures** designed to achieve the desired **quality characteristics**.



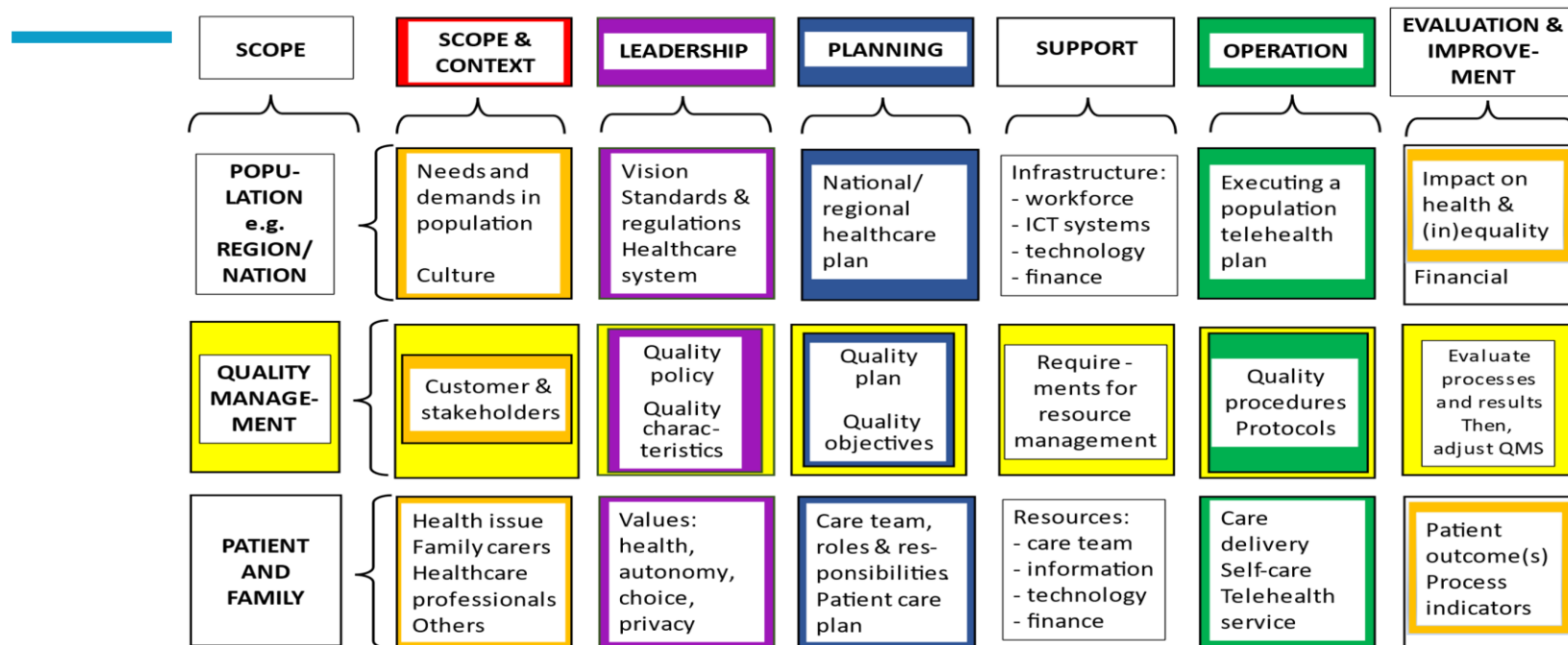
Developing a unifying framework

The quality triad can be generalized to correspond with the main headings in ISO quality management processes, namely scope and context, leadership, planning, support, operation, and evaluation / improvement.

These processes can be applied at the at the population level, and the patient or family level, from determining the patient's health issue, to patient outcomes.



A unifying framework





Conclusions

- ISO 13131 provides a universal umbrella standard for quality management of the healthcare processes, technology, devices and software that support telehealth services.
- The unifying framework for quality management of telehealth services can be used to develop new standards or guidelines and navigate complex sets of standards, guidelines and advice.
- Because the framework is based on the ISO quality management processes it can be applied throughout the development, planning, operation, evaluation and accreditation of telehealth services.