



Rural NHS connectivity: Potential vs reality

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To review:

1) The potential

2)  eHealth

3) The problem

4) The solution(s)?



The potential

- Emergency calls
- Photos
- Video – telemedicine
- Reference
- Compliance
- Cloud



Apps.

1) Medicine



2) Travel / weather / news



Quality strategy



- “The eHealth strategy exists to deliver the quality strategy”



	Rural / remote	Apps	Poor connectivity
Scotland	8	0	0
England	1	7	0
Wales	2	0	0

General Practice

- Broadband < 2 Mb/s
- Clinical Portal



- *“Some days the speed is so poor we have no access to patient records”*

Rural GP Association of Scotland

RuralGP.scot | Formerly known as RPAS



Rural reality?

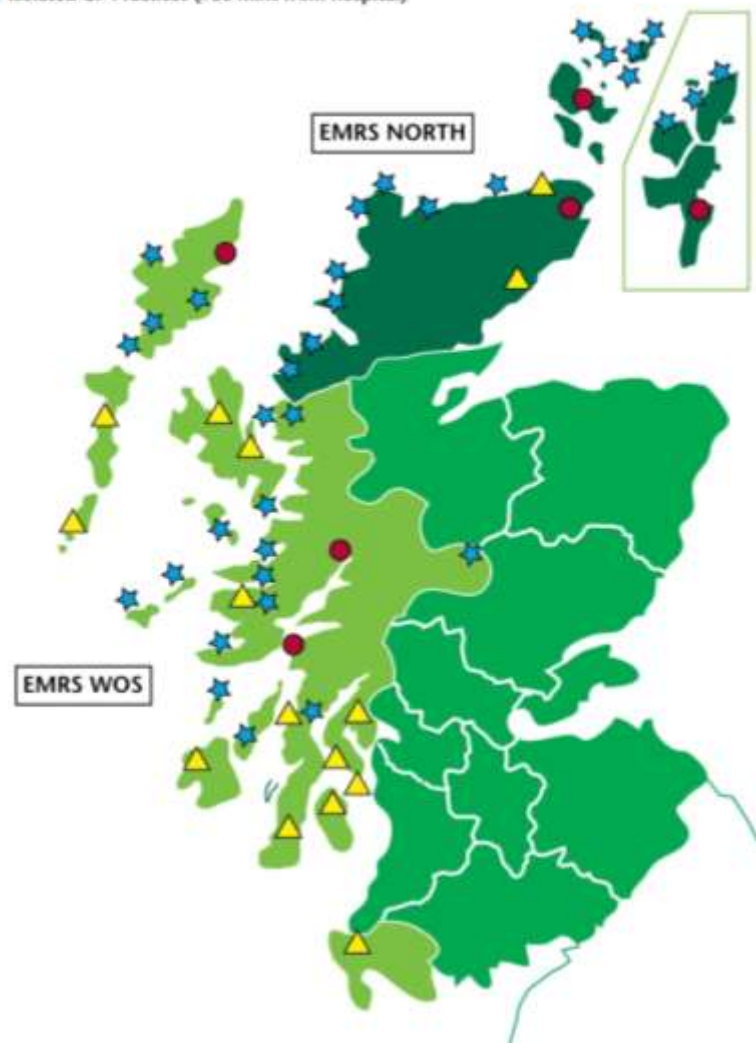
- Can we deliver the quality strategy without rural connectivity?
- Would rural areas benefit most from connectivity?
- Is this a digital version of the ‘inverse care law’?
- Integration of social care?



The problem

- Simple survey
- 34 / 66 sites
no 'good' 2G coverage
- 5 community hospitals
- ruralgp.com

- Rural General Hospitals
- Community Hospitals Receiving Emergencies
- Isolated GP Practices (>60 mins from hospital)



Rural digital divide?

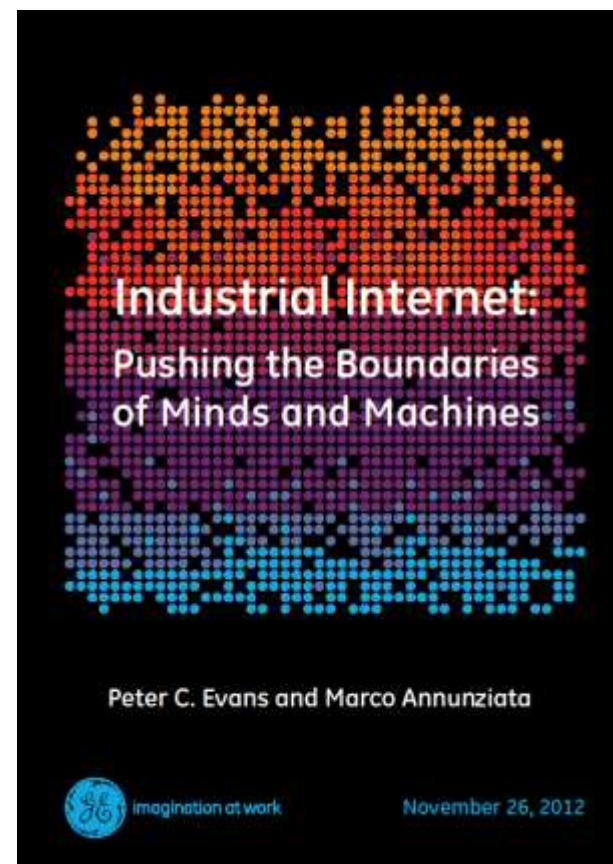
UK 2013 'all 4'	2G		3G		No 2G	
	premises	area	premises	area	premises	area
(%)						
Argyll & Bute	71	21	18	1	6	37
Highland	75	33	23	<1	4	35
Orkney	72	59	0	0	5	10
Shetland	54	33	0	0	10	21
Western Isles	50	33	0	0	9	24
Glasgow	99	99	100	100	0	0

<http://maps.ofcom.org.uk>

Mobile Performance and Coverage in Scotland, Scottish Govt. Sept. 2013

The future?


- Convergence of technologies
- “1% year on year savings”
- Rural service provision further disadvantaged?




Progress?

- MIP
- National roaming



Mobile Broadband
and the UK Economy 30 April 2012 

Rolling out 4G LTE mobile broadband
Improving connectivity — stimulating the economy



• Mobile now the dominant telephone technology.
• New tech puts mobile broadband on par with fixed.
• £57bn investment when the economy needs it most.

• Superfast mobile broadband where fixed line can't go.
• Platform for innovation and m-commerce.
• Efficiencies created by 4G LTE could add 1/2% to GDP.

What can be done?



Questions?



I don't think I really understood the digital divide until you got a better, faster computer than mine.

Summary

- Rural areas have greatest potential benefit
- “It would really transform our working lives and patient safety here”
(Orkney GP).
- *Action is needed to close the rural digital divide!*

