Referral was originally considered but avoided as a result of eConsult.

Case Example

PCP seeks management advice for a patient with swelling in the left leg due to a blood clot. The right leg is clear, and the clot appears limited to a lower leg superficial vein. PCP asks if anticoagulants should be prescribed and what testing (if any) the patient needs.

Day 1
PCP receives advice from the eConsult to avoid anticoagulants and prescribe a combination of anti-inflammatory medicine and compression stockings. Specialist recommends conducting ultrasound at one and two weeks to make sure more clots do not form in other veins.

Day 2
PCP accepts the recommendation and closes the case.

PCP eConsults
Champlain BASE™ eConsult service improves access to specialist care for patients by facilitating electronic communication between Primary Care Providers (PCPs) and specialists.

From June 2012 to March 2016, 109 PCPs directed 162 eConsults to thrombosis specialists.

Average response time was 36 hours.

Average time to complete the eConsult was 11 minutes.

Content of questions asked by PCPs:

- Venous thromboembolism (VTE) management: 26.0%
- Peri-procedural anticoagulation management: 15.5%
- Thrombophilia testing: 13.3%
- Superficial venous thrombosis (SVT): 10.5%
- Other*: 34.7%

*Topics included: oral contraceptive pill/hormone replacement therapy (VTE risk) and atrial fibrillation.

Improved timely access and resource utilization:
"I had a concise but thorough answer back within hours. Where I live we do not have access to a thrombo specialist and the patient would have needed to drive over 2 hours and waited months to get this information."

Value expert guidance:
"The consultant suggested something that I had not thought about."

Educational opportunities:
"I can often apply what I’ve learned in an eConsult to future patients as well. Not only have I avoided a referral with this eConsult but I’ll likely save time for future patients in similar situations."

PCP eConsults provided PCPs with advice for a new or additional course of action: 53%

Current course of action was confirmed: 45%

Referral was avoided as a result of eConsult: 48%