

# Digitalisation of the Health Sector - Sept 28, 2021

Hosted by European Internet Forum

[European Internet Forum - Digitalisation of the Health Sector](#)

## Description

This event will seek to discuss the role that the EU can play to support member states and patients, with a special focus on the EU4Health Programme (2021-2027), which includes in its key objectives the digital transformation of health systems.

### Opening remarks

- Marina Kaljurand MEP and EIF Steering Committee Member

### Speakers

- Cristian-Silviu Busoi MEP and EIF Member
- Ioana-Maria Gligor, Head of Unit for European Reference Networks and Digital Health, DG SANTE European Commission
- Wayne Miller, Director, EMEA Healthcare Practice, Zebra Technologies
- Alexander Volt, Solutions Advisor, Intellectsoft

### Moderator

- Maria Rosa Gibellini, Director General, European Internet Forum

Notes by Mario Reale/GEANT

## **Maria Rosa Gibellini / EIF**

I will leave the floor to MEP Marina Kaljurand; We will focus EU4Health programme: guests will be

Cristian Busoi MEP

Alexander Volt - Solution Advisor at Intellectsoft

### **Opening Remarks,**

by Marina Kaljurand MEP and EIF Steering Committee Member

Coming from Estonia

Healthcare industry is constantly evolving, due to many factors, like aging of population; COVID pandemic forced us to rethink some of the steps and deal with the weaknesses of our health systems: This truly is a digital healthcare moment.

On March 26 The EU commission announced entry to force of new EU4Health programme to support EU 2021-2027 - with a total assigned budget of 1.51 Billion Euros.

This is by far the largest health program ever launched and it will pave the way to EU health Union by investing in priorities:

- one crucial element is to process health data

- how to transfer digital data
- how to improve access to eHealth data
- EU health legislation
- evidence based decision making

All these will increase preparedness for any future crisis: however we need a supportive policy framework, an interoperable data infrastructure, and coherent legislations, a network supporting cooperation and sharing of health data cross countries

We now see EU COVID certificate is working well - we could consider this a first step towards **digital identity in EU, that is still missing**

we do not have a fully functioning single market and eHealth systems yet: this bit is badly missing.

eHealth is one of the greatest challenges of our time, we need more data scientists, interested in joining

Multi Stakeholders are not slogans any more, a reality., like inclusiveness, talking to all actors in the field I realized this.

I am glad to hear people sharing their experiences this morning.

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### **Christian Busoi MEP**

The issue of digitalization of healthcare sector is extremely important in these times

According to the last survey, by the EU and OECD we will suffer from unequal access to Healthcare. Patients go with paper dossiers.

Readmission, services are fragmented in many of the Member States:

the situation is very unequal in this area

we need to transform our health systems to be resilient

Digitalization is needed for AI in healthcare

new techs, more eHealth solutions: we need more efficient systems

Healthcare has proven addressing challenges in health sector to make system, more resilient

We need to plan for next 5-7 years from today

Even before Corona spread out, EU parliament was committed to the key value of digital transformation for ehealth: Even before COVID this direction was very clear

We recognize the central role digitalization can play for health

several acts have been undertaken: resolution on DSM Digital transformation

EU4Health: when we decided, I was rapporteur for EU Parliament for that project, digitalization was key

We need to implement these priorities into practices

What digitalization pillar from EU4Health will be met:

We need collaboration and need a commission to promote the benefit of digitalization

I am not only rapporteur for EU4Health to the Parliament, but chair of Industry chair,  
**I advocated the creation of the EU eHealth record**  
**Health Data space is fundamental here**

Improving health infrastructures by turning it digital is of paramount importance  
Also, finally, do not forget about Horizon Europe: supports R&D in Cancer research, robotics, telemedicine, innovative therapies.

The EU RRF is also fundamental in this respect:  
**We need to encourage the member states which have already proposed important projects in digitization of healthcare, to fully implement these projects !**

I believe that digitalization will improve the eHealth care system, enable patients to have access to health care and improvements, react to critical situations will empower patients in managing their diseases and be better treated

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**Wayne Miller / Zebra Technologies**

Data: we need them to be safe, accurate, real time and secure  
Devices need to be always connected  
BYOD is key here  
**WIFI security is also relevant here**

So when we think about who / why / what / where ....we need to think about all this.

Real time Locations services is key for Real-Time location services

Real time info being added allows us to respond to emergencies  
We cannot operate a real time response unless we really gather REAL TIME information

Data Security : Devices and Systems  
Lost and stolen system are causes of data breaches  
BYOD in, we need to be careful: we do not have control on people's application or which WiFi they use  
Think long and hard about BYOD  
Think about device purity and integrity to catch real time !

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**Alexander Volt / Intellect Soft**

There are a lot of requests to do stuff in healthcare !  
A few words on this:

Innovation is to make personalize and bespoke healthcare, for all specialities: precision medicine: data driven  
Rising importance goes beyond simply facilitating data connection and streamlining operations: We need a real single market for data

Large data lakes can be analysed  
allow real time assessment in any region  
taking into account demographics.

One example of this:

From Taiwan there was a fascinating study, 800 million patients, managing previously  
unlocked cancer diseases

The more into data is available, accurate and effective, the more effective and punctual  
algorithms become !

OpenNCP is a key initiative in this respect of crossing national borders:

[OpenNCP Community Home - eHealth DSI Technical Community - CEF Digital \(europa.eu\)](#)

OpenNCP is an example of across nations transferring

Taking this change will require strong leadership in the EU

Leadership and underline processes

Another point to make: large # of doctors have been subject to burn out  
working under demanding demographics conditions, during the pandemics

**Time and energy of staff goes to collecting history and records for patients  
this limits time and quality of provided services**

**basically poor data collection and recording causes staff burnouts**

to improve eHealth sector effectiveness

**Max added value, while limiting administrative activities**

Less time put in form filling while enabling service design and allocate time for care !

Vaste number of people, to have patients information

GDPR addresses to cather consent of patients

GDPR is powerful, ethical, it can be a bottleneck in the digitalization of eHealth at large scale

**We need training and leadership**

We need to high level EU leadership , educating stakeholders

not only compliance procedures but also full visibility

to implement these initiative efficiently

Across EU initiatives can improve quality with data transfer improved

improve to patient's wellness

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## **Q&A session**

Marina Kaljurand opens the Q&A session: raised points have been:

- eHealth is the future
- benefit of patients, benefit of wellness of people
- everyone raised challenges

Some of the mentioned challenges:

- Data breaches
- Trust

in Estonia we are almost 100% connected

40 million eHealth docs in eHealth system

ePrescription we have in Estonia

People own their data, not the hospitals any more

they own the data and decide to whom give access

Sharing data and info has not been easy !

My first question for the speaker is: **where do you see the biggest obstacles ?**

Data breaches happen, trust...

**We need to introduce a pan-EU digital ID !**

What we need to do: 1,2,3 immediately ? this is my question

What are the first 3 things we need to do ?

### **Wayne Miller's answers:**

Before pandemics we were all travelling for holidays and work;

1. one of the main point is DATA SHARING

when I go on holiday to Spain, why can't I **share my Digital health record with the local doctors !**

We need to work on this !

2. Point 2 : unification of standards allowing to share data

**we cannot agree yet between countries and orgs how to share the data !**

3. Translate: translation is key ! how do we do this ?

We need interoperability

### **Alexander Volt's answers:**

I would like to go beyond the data side, already mentioned, and focus on the processes ! :

- 1) we have been observing working with healthcare institutions, the staff on the ground have their hands full, we need leadership, knowledge and right procedures in place !  
I mean we have seen staff has to answer info twice, internally in the CRM, then to another terminal.....this accumulates, there is more and more of this We need to reduce the bureaucratic things they do
- 2) Education is lacking here ! digital transformation is a journey ! resources are needed,
- 3) The hands are full : we need to enable and empower them; give them implementation frameworks and guidelines provide the structure of flows to follow !  
This is badly needed !

**Question from Cees Lanting:**

**Question: how good is the data we want to connect ?**

(Cees Lanting) - with COVID we have seen data are poorly reliable - what can we do here ?

**Answer (Alexander Volt) :** It is never a straight line, we need more work during the implementation phase, so to put less effort in future, we need to do more now to be able to do less in future

It has to be done, real issue is having appropriate personas in place, in charge of this transformation

a program director, a program manager, with a good understanding of the operations in their institutions, then they could succeed ! right people in the right process supported by leadership

You need to teach people to improve the quality: if you provide the frameworks, you will succeed

setting the right parameter in place, to gather and assess data ! provide the right f/w. system of coordinates, parameters, and there is little left to human mistakes

**Wayne adds:**

GDPR is a good start, but we need to look at other industries, like banking..

Collect and present different data

it is about political leadership

centralized ( not only, but also), healthcare leadership

to understand what data do we need to have for the benefit of patients

it is political legislation here needed

**Question: how to ensure data will not be used to DISCRIMINATE people ?**

**Marina Kaljurand answers:** my first point is : in many cases PAPER files are more easily accessible than online data

you can enter doctor offices, copy documents....online data is NOT less secure than offline here. Cybersecurity and GDPR is key

Second point: even access to data is not as bad as keeping integrity of data

If people MANIPULATE my health data ! This is also a real challenge !!

We need technology and Cybersecurity

One example: if I am taken to emergency room and I show my ID card: emergency doctors can see some very basic information, like my allergies

Blockchain tech being used

Nobody has proved online services are less secure than offline, just challenges are different, we need to consider the human factor

**Alexander's answer:** in reality when you reach health care professional you will share your data

Access to data by healthcare institutions, so what is the concern ? for third parties of course, is an issue

Data security is just about setting the right security standards

I 100% agree, if done right this will be a lot more secure than any tangible physical paper trail

**Policy: we need some elements of additional consent, but most of it is already thought in GDPR: consent is key ! I do not see problems here**

Ioana Gligor JOINS us (at 11 AM)

Q from M.Reale: what could be a positive role played by the EU Research and Education Networks - Answers: none :-)

**Ioana Gligor**

**We are in the process of developing a legislative proposal for EU dataspace** about use of data for health care (primary use) and research (secondary use)

About primary use of data: use them for healthcare  
persons can have access to their data and share these data with healthcare professional when necessary  
will reduce costs and wrong diagnosis

this is also inspired by what done in several member states, where interoperability portal and patients portal are already part of healthsystem  
based also on  
8 member states are supporting sharing of prescriptions of patients and data  
we hope to have more

also images should be shared  
and also the access of patients to data in the language of the local language

**Put patients in the the centre, this is key**, allowing also the free provision of digital health services and products  
data can come from electronic health records and others

**Second chapter of the document we're writing is: secondary usage of health data**

reuse of health data for research  
we are working on joint action datas  
how the cross border cooperation among member states could be enhanced and stimulated

these are therefore the main areas of ongoing work

Impact assessment by the legislative proposal  
adopted Q1 2022  
Legislation ready before the summer

**Question on the role of eHealth Network:**  
**Answer by Ioana Gligor:**

ehealth network is working especially on the primary usage of health data  
eHealth network: a lot of meeting with member states ongoing  
we are covering 40 countries

a part works on overall sharing of health data  
Joint action data, led by [SITRA](#), innovation fund in Finland  
working on secondary use of health data

**Marina commenting to Ioana Gligor:**

You mentioned COVID certificate, what about e-prescription can be the first step towards eHealth data exchanges  
Some countries already use it !  
ePrescription is very convenient

**Ioana Gligor:**

Since 2019 ePrescription is included, 20 000 citizens in FL and ESTONIA, got ePrescription in another country  
it is there and is growing  
shows the potential of sharing their data  
ePrescription continues to be used very widely  
ePrescription is already working, prescribed in one country and used in another country not only in the online pharmacy, rather in real bricks pharmacies  
Pharmacies need to understand in their own languages  
Data needs to be available in the language of healthcare professionals ! to avoid MISUNDERSTANDING ! Greek physician and Bulgarian patient, for example...for sure this is one example of an issue !

**Question: How do we link up digitalization with the use of tracking of medicine and medical devices ?**

**Wayne:**

barcodes appear on the boxes, already  
we can track down to those individual path levels  
this also provides backwards visibilities, on how much money has been spent  
not only who gave what to whom, but also who is supplying what in your market  
the stage is already set  
right info on the box is there  
we need to have this drifting into the patients records  
when you collect a lot of data, paper record will access limited amount of data  
digital breaches can imply massive losses  
but anonymization will help here

**Alexander:** this only depends on the design of the system: **if records are INDIVIDUALLY encrypted, you only have access to a single record.** so there are ways around this  
There are ways around this apparent issue of “breaches will impact huge amounts of data!”



**Marina mentioned digital identities:**

do you see a transformation in the EU going ahead hand in hand with eHealth here ?

**Marina:**

**ID cards are still not interoperable !**

People are very emotional on digital identities, we are used to use them for banking for example

some services we get anonymously

Digital Single Market won't be completed without digital ID

consumers and SPs need TRUST that is still missing ! there is a lot, not only laws and regulation, but also RAISE AWARENESS OF PEOPLE !

It is crucial !!

We need the EU to improve here !

COVID certificate was the first step in which people understood how useful it is

Digital ID would be more useful to use online services

I am a strong supported of digital identification

**Ioana:** I can only second what Marina said ! Digital Identity is not meant to be spying on people !

GDPR has imposed very high standards for data protection

let s be clear: around the globe we are so mindful about data protection !

Access to data and online verification.....many other regions of the world looked at us like we were science fiction

in EU efforts are already HUGE, efforts to protect personal data, we need to ensure this won't stop us

**Alexander:** not much to add, 100% agree with Marina and Ioana: this is part of our societal evolution, our civilization

decades ago, we did not have passports ! there were concerns when they had been introduced, but still they helped. can be used to control and spy, but introduces a degree of convenience that warrens their usage.

Anything in the world could be used to spy, so let's focus on the positive side here ! focus on the benefits we can draw from it ! I am a big believer in education, can sort things

**Wayne:** I agree with all previous points.

Also credit cards can be used to trace us

we create transactions, people share data willingly everyday

health records can be anonymised, and under the control of people; we need to educate the users , industry, tech, politicians, to hear us !

**Closing the meeting:**

### **First 3 fundamental missing ingredients coming to mind of each speaker:**

#### **Ioana:**

1. digitalization of the health sector not evenly done in all member state
2. interoperability is fundamental
3. data quality
4. trust into the system, respect built in a way which is privacy protecting
5. digitalization in an interoperable way and trust preserving way and respecting individual rights

#### **Alexander Volt.**

1. Empowerment in workplace: how to empower employees, to carry your strategic vision
2. it is about implementation:
3. a) leadership ! messages with smart and clear objectives people can relate to
4. b) information and training, it is complex, but fundamental. HHealthcare : area of expertise in these institutions is patient care, not IT ! you need the ight people
5. c) setting up the right processes !!

So these 3 pillars are fundamental . to allow smooth transition

1. LEADERSHIP
2. INFORMATION AND TRAINING
3. RIGHT PROCESSES

#### **Wayne:**

1. give benefit that share data
2. data can be use to improve life of individual doctors, we retain them, monitor this burn out for example
3. efficiencies cost, , tech will dirve efficiency to ensure that everyone will benefit, self sustain our health systems

#### **Marina**

1. LEADERSHIP and POLITICAL LEADERSHIP: national EU parliament members are participating today to the discussion now, this is good: we are in the same room now ! you need to educate the politicians
2. Inclusiveness: decision making not in the hands of IT people: academia, senior stuff ; with digital solutions governance
3. Education/Awareness raising among all involved people: educate all generations to join the new digital hera: it will stay in future !!

