DigitalHealthEurope Digest #4

Dear digital health enthusiast,

The fourth edition of the DigitalHealthEurope (DHE) Digest features the roundtable meetings which were conducted in December 2020 and March 2021. These meetings focused on **legal and interoperability challenges of health data use** and on **cloud technology**. In each workshop, experts were invited to share their expertise to discuss the issue at stake. This digest issue informs you about the roundtables, their topics and aims, and highlights the key strands of discussion.

Featured in this issue:
the DigitalHealthEurope roundtables

What are the DHE roundtables?

The roundtables are workshops dedicated to the **three topics** of (1) legal challenges in using health data, (2) health data standards and interoperability and (3) cloud technology in health data. Two workshops each were conducted on legal challenges and interoperability, and one workshop focused on cloud technology. Each workshop was attended by experts from related fields to discuss the issue at hand, map the scene, identify crucial points and think about innovative measures to tackle the identified challenges. Out of the three issues

discussed in the roundtables, well-formulated and concise **recommendations** are being distilled. They relate to the European Commission's 2018 Communication on the Digital Transformation of Health and Care in the Digital Single Market. At the end of the DHE project, they will be presented to the European Commission.

Sneak peek

Roundtable on legal challenges in using health data

A central question during the roundtable sessions was how any European law can be made into **an enabler** instead of there being many different guidelines and different interpretations on precisely the same norm. Another overarching topic of the roundtables was that legal norms should not only focus on data protection but rather on **citizen protection**. The experts pointed to a current human resources deficit around data protection and recommended that the challenge be tackled through more education being available for everyone who is handling data. Finally, experts discussed the **governance process**. They highlighted two points: the importance of the active engagement of citizens, and the use of plain language, so as to facilitate engagement and guarantee a better understanding of (legal, regulatory, and ethical) norms.

Roundtable on health data standards and interoperability

These roundtable sessions focused on the **demand side of interoperability**. Experts identified two key issues: citizens as change agents, and the need to move from data for patients towards tools for their health data management. Incentivising interoperable data and creating responsible data were identified as central points of the ongoing discussion around health data standards and interoperability. In this regard, **standards adoption** was

analysed with an important step in mind: support for the transformation of healthcare data ecosystem(s) towards an authentic real-world data ecosystem.

Roundtable on cloud technology in health data

Work has been done by DHE on **mapping data-sharing initiatives and cloud technology** projects funded under Horizon 2020. As a result, the discussion during this roundtable focussed on three main points: leveraging promising initiatives; outlining the basic conditions and purposes of cloud use; ensuring security and privacy in the use of cloud technology in health. A key insight was the need to distinguish between **different types of requirements**: the needs for infrastructure and requirements for applications run on the cloud. From the discussion, it became clear that many of these topics point to challenges that go beyond cloud technology, such as **terminology management**.

More details about the discussions in the roundtables can be found in our summary document.

Output

During the roundtables, many concrete ideas were summarised and added to the many information and suggestions stemming from two years of activities within DigitalHealthEurope. On that basis, **preliminary recommended actions** for responsible and safe health data sharing and use are currently being elaborated.

In principle three types of actions were identified:

► **Large implementation pilots and projects** supporting regional and national early adopters to collaborate across borders to develop best practices, lessons learned and accelerate the reuse of data involving mature and high priority use cases.

► **Research and Innovation** projects.

► **Co-ordination and Support Actions**.

Stakeholder viewpoints are key. To gather stakeholder-specific input on the draft recommended actions for responsible and safe health data sharing and use, a webinar for the eHealth Stakeholder Group (eHSG) 2019-2022 member organisations was conducted on 28th May 2021. The webinar focussed on contextualising the preliminary recommended actions in light of the eHSG members' experiences and perceived challenges. Special attention was paid to the proposed legislation for the **European Health Data Space** (EHDS).

The webinar was highly interactive. It involved the participating stakeholders in both group and plenary discussions to reflect on the kind of actions that need to be taken in the future. They included European Union (EU) policy, regulatory action or support at three specific levels (EU, national, or through stakeholders).

A special focus was discussion of **priority use cases** for the EHDS. The aim was to identify existing gaps in implementation and state the content of a potential strategy to produce and deliver tangible benefits to citizens and society.

What else is happening?

Attend the DHE Summit - Save the dates

The DHE partners would love to share their learnings, findings, and proposed policy recommendations with a broad audience of stakeholders. The aim of the summit is to generate a discussion about the challenges and solutions related to the **future use of health data**, the upcoming **European Health Data Space**, and many other **health data-related**

issues. Save the date in your diaries: **28-30th September 2021**. A more detailed agenda will follow in Digest #5.

Horizon Europe and EU4Health first work programmes published

Horizon Europe Health work programme for 2021-2022 and EU4Health 2021 work programme have now been published. Consult the Horizon Europe work programme and the EU4Health work programme.

Get engaged on the DHE forum

DHE has launched a **one-stop-shop** discussion Forum around digital solutions for person-centred integrated care. Interested stakeholders can exchange knowledge and information around digital technology, implementation and scaling-up, health data, relevant scientific or policy documents, and can promote events. Each **forum** hosts various topics for discussion. In the forum, DHE is also offering the opportunity to brainstorm about project ideas under draft Horizon Europe calls which will be published in the second half of June 2021. Come and **find the right partners** for a winning consortium on the DHE Forum! A private meeting

can be organised for those groups of stakeholders that get into an active discussion under a call. As soon as the Digital Europe and EU4Health programmes are also published, **discussions will be hosted** for each relevant call that has a 2021 deadline for submission.

Successful funding pathways in digital health

The **Reference Sites Coordination Network** (RSCN) is organising an online event on 30th June 2021 at 11am CET to raise awareness of successful funding pathways in regions. The ambition is to grow the participation of digital health stakeholders throughout the various European funding programmes. In the session, you will learn all about **securing and combining funding at different levels** to advance your own digital health and care agendas. Consult the agenda for speakers.

The DigitalHealthEurope communication team