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eHealth^{IT}

Better Healthcare for Europe ^[1]

Information and Communication Technology for health and wellbeing (eHealth) is becoming increasingly important to deliver top-quality care to European citizens. The 'eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020' of the European Commission describes the actions foreseen on this topic.

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The first EU [eHealth Action Plan 2004-2011](#) ^[2] covered electronic prescriptions and health cards to new information systems that reduce waiting times and errors, in order to facilitate a more harmonious and complementary European approach to eHealth.

The second [eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020](#) ^[3](see the prior [public consultation](#) ^[4]) operates in the context of [Article 14 of Directive 2011/24](#) ^[5]on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. It focuses on the following:

- Supporting [research, development and innovation](#) ^[6];
- Promoting [international cooperation](#) ^[7];
- Achieving wider [interoperability of ehealth services](#) ^[8];
- Ensuring wider deployment & facilitating uptake.

Telemedicine

Together with the eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020, the Commission issued a [Staff Working Document \(SWD\) on Telemedicine](#) ^[9] to help deal with the legal aspects related to data protection rules, privacy matters and reimbursement.

NB: Both the eHealth Action Plan and the SWD on Telemedicine are intended as guidelines, and are not binding on Member States.

eHealth Network

The [eHealth Network](#) ^[10] is a voluntary network of representatives from all national authorities in the EU. It draws up guidelines, for example on [how to apply patients' rights in cross-border healthcare](#) ^[11]. In general, the network aims to enhance interoperability between electronic health systems and continuity of care and to ensure access to safe and quality healthcare.

More info

- [More info on the eHealth Action Plan](#) ^[12] (FAQ's, press releases, etc.).

- See the page [ICT for Social Challenges](#) [13]

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[10] http://ec.europa.eu/health/ehealth/policy/network/index_en.htm

[11] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/eu-takes-major-step-improve-cross-border-care>

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