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ANNEX I to the

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

A Lead Market Initiative for Europe

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Action Plan for eHealth

ACTION PLAN OF THE LEAD MARKET INITIATIVE IN THE AREA OF eHEALTH

This Action Plan describes the implementation of the Lead Market Initiative in the field of *eHealth: ICT solutions for patients, medical services and payment institutions*.

eHealth tools or solutions include products, systems and services that go beyond simple Internet-based applications, for instance tools for health authorities and professionals as well as personalised health systems for patients and citizens. Examples include health information networks, electronic health records, telemedicine services, personal wearable and portable communicable systems, health portals and many other tools assisting health monitoring, diagnosis and treatment¹. **eHealth can help to deliver better care for less money** within citizen-centred health delivery systems. It can thus alleviate the cost pressure on the public budgets for health. Without significant reforms, including the better use of eHealth, health expenditure is expected to increase from 9% of GDP at present to around 16% by 2020 in response to an 'ageing' Europe notably with more costly chronic disease patients and higher expectations of healthcare delivery².

Substantial research investments in eHealth have been made over the past decade. Nevertheless, the ICT investments in this area have stayed behind that of other service sectors. The take-up of technical and organisational solutions is often hindered by a strong fragmentation of the market, in particular due to different social security systems and a lack of interoperability. This prevents economies of scale. The situation is aggravated by a lack of legal certainty as regards reimbursement, liability and a lack of awareness on the correct application of the legal provisions on the protection of personal data. This not only hampers the product take-up, but also business investments.

Standardisation, for instance of various information exchange formats, certifications of interoperable systems and large-scale demonstration projects (including the legal and organisational feasibility) could help to overcome this. The latter would also allow an evaluation of the financial benefits inherent in eHealth systems. This in return could support the information and networking activities of public procurers who seek to switch from buying the cheapest solution to purchasing those goods and services with the best life-cycle cost perspective and who need a more solid basis for the necessary cost-benefit assessments. An eHealth scorecard could provide Member States with a tool to learn from well-performing solutions and share the information on benefits and lessons learnt.

¹ See Commission eHealth action plan COM (2004) 356 final:
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/health/index_en.htm

² PWC: HealthCast 2020 study, 2006.

Policy Instruments	Objectives	Actions	Timetable	Actors
Legislation	Improve legal certainty and consumer confidence	Screen existing EU legislation related to eHealth and provide clarification and guidance for applying the legal framework for eHealth products and services Assess possibilities for adoption of a legal initiative for eHealth and telemedicine	2008-2010	EC
	Ensure protection of personal data in eHealth systems	Adopt an initiative to promote application and enforcement of Personal Data Protection legislation related to eHealth		EC
	Enhance enforcement of consumer protection legislation by Member States for eHealth products	Promote knowledge and information dissemination on safe and secure eHealth products and use of existing infrastructure to protect consumers – networks, best practice repositories, hotlines		EC
	Improve cross-border reimbursement	Introduce the Electronic Health Insurance Card Improve legal clarity regarding medical reimbursement based on recommendations from the Health Services Initiative		EC Member States
	Support Patient Mobility	Provide citizens with relevant and up-to-date information on cross-border health services		EC Member States
Public	Improve adaptation to needs, interoperability and cost-effectiveness of	Promote networking and cooperation among public procurers in the development process of	2008-2010	EC

Policy Instruments	Objectives	Actions	Timetable	Actors
Procurement	innovative solutions for public services	new solutions Associate procurers in consultation process for CIP and FP7 calls for proposals		Member States
Standardisation, Labelling, Certification	Enhance eHealth interoperability	Adopt Recommendation on eHealth interoperability Favour the application of Recommendation on eHealth interoperability by enhancing cooperation between MS to build coherence in their health systems Define required standards, establish review committee to identify focus areas	2008 2008-2010 2009	EC Member States EC, CEN, CENELEC, ETSI International standardisation bodies
	Provide adequate certification	Issue guidelines for certification of eHealth applications Form expert group to encourage MS to establish a coordinated work program	2008	EC Member States Private stakeholders

Policy Instruments	Objectives	Actions	Timetable	Actors
Complementary Activities	Mobilise public and private financing	<p>Promote the exchange of experience in financing from such funding mechanisms as the EU structural funds and European Investment Bank initiatives specific to eHealth domain – workshops, networks etc</p> <p>Strengthen R&D on ICT for Health in FP7 and in Member States programmes</p> <p>Strengthen cooperation between national and community R&D testing and pilots, involve users in RTD actions</p>	2008-2010	<p>EC</p> <p>Member States</p> <p>Private stakeholders</p>
	Facilitate the uptake of EU-wide eHealth solutions	Launch pilot actions under the CIP	2008-2010	<p>EC</p> <p>Member States</p> <p>Private stakeholders</p>
	Support healthcare authorities in promoting the adoption of good practice in eHealth.	<p>Introduce eHealth Innovation Scorecards/Benchmarking to monitor eHealth performance in Member States (MS) and facilitate learning</p> <p>Coordination actions including exchange of best practices at i2010 sub-group meetings and annual eHealth conferences</p>	<p>2008</p> <p>2008-2010</p>	<p>EC</p> <p>Member States</p>