



22ND eHEALTH NETWORK MEETING 7 NOVEMBER 2022, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

COVER NOTE

1.2 Readiness and action plan towards eHealth Network guidelines on Hospital Discharge report guidelines

1. Issue at stake

Following the eHealth Network Common Semantic Strategy plan and the mandate assigned by the eHealth Network during the June 2022 meeting, the subgroup on Semantic started to work on the readiness assessment for **eHealth Network guidelines on Hospital Discharge Reports domain**.

The purpose of this work was:

- to provide the eHealth Network with insights about the existence of **mature specifications** to be used as blueprint for the eHealth Network interoperability guidelines for Hospital Discharge Reports;
- report to the eHealth Network on Member States **readiness to implement** such guidelines.

The work performed reused the outcomes from X-eHealth project (2022) and other relevant sources like the EC study “Interoperability of Electronic Health Records in the EU (2020)”.

Based on this work and follow up discussions at the eHealth Network, it is expected that the eHealth Network will take a decision on how to proceed with the preparation of the guidelines on Hospital Discharge Reports domain and the timeline for such work (please see below point d)).

2. Summary

From the reflections about the scope of the guidelines on Hospital Discharge Reports domain, resulted a common understanding that these guidelines should: i) support continuity of care; ii) improve communication between healthcare services, iii) improve patient safety, and iv) improve efficiency and consistency of the discharge process. However, it is not clear if the scope for the guidelines should be i) [hospital discharge report] only for hospital inpatient situations (stayed for a minimum of one day/night in the healthcare facilities) or ii) [Discharge report] for any kind of Discharge event, not dependent on overnight stay, that takes place outside of the country of affiliation.

Regarding Member States readiness, the EC study (mentioned above) mentions that “(...) *Discharge reports are relatively simple (compared to patient summaries and ePrescriptions) and are often designed to contain hand-written text instead of structured information, which could explain a higher level of use.(...)*”. In the other hand, according to X-eHealth survey, only 1 Member State has a solution suitable to be used as reference for cross-border guidelines while 3 are partly suitable and 11 Member States have solutions not suitable for this purpose.

The assessment on the use cases shows that the highest value is achieved in scenario a) where discharge reports are sent from the country of treatment to the country of affiliation where this information is added to the patient electronic health records, facilitating, and

promoting continuity of care. In the other hand, scenario b) fits better in the existing workflows of MyHealth@EU, namely where a health professional in the country of treatment gains access to the Discharge Reports available in the country of affiliation.

There is a common understanding that the guidelines should contain a dataset for discharge reports. However, it was not possible to get to an agreement on how detailed these datasets should look like: a) as detailed as the Patient Summary (requiring a significant implementation effort, considering today state of play in Member States) or b) a high-level dataset presenting for example the sections of the report and preferred code systems to be used while expressing the clinical content.

On the interplay with other eHealth Network guidelines, it was identified a clear interplay with the Patient Summary guidelines, namely that essential information contained in the discharge reports should be added to the Patient Summary And that some structural elements and data sets could be reused for the new guideline.

The open questions described above require the strategic guidance from the eHealth Network on how to proceed, namely:

- a) What scope should be adopted for the first version of this guidelines: i) hospital discharge reports or ii) discharge report?
- b) Should there be any distinctions between the possible use cases identified, namely should there be indicated any recommendation for implementation in MyHealth@EU?
- c) Considering the implementation burden, how should the dataset be described in the guidelines: a) section level datasets with indication of preferred code systems or b) detailed description equivalent to level of detail in other eHealth Network guidelines?
- d) Considering the complexity of the dataset and interplays of this guidelines but also its importance for implementation projects (i.e. Myhealth@EU), it is recommended to adopt a 2 step approach for the preparation of this guidelines. The first step (ready by June 2023) would be the outline of the guideline including candidate content in some of the key chapters and some consultation with key stakeholders. The second step - the consolidated guidelines (including a wider stakeholders consultation) - would be available by Nov 2023).

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

For eHealth Network decision, on the strategy and policies to answer the open questions a), b), c) and endorse the desired way forward on d).