



**19<sup>TH</sup> eHEALTH NETWORK 3 JUNE 2021, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

**COVER NOTE**

**5.1 Recommendations for the development of national digital health networks – eHAction**

*(Official title of the deliverable)* - eHealth Network Recommendations for the development of National Digital Health Networks in the EU Member States

**1. Issue at stake**

The purpose of this document is to help the Member States in the setting up of "interoperable" national networks that could operate in an interconnected manner, between Member States, between those networks as well as between the bodies and processes. These networks should also be coordinated at EU level through eHealth Network. They should support strengthening the interoperability within Member States and across EU.

**2. Summary**

The idea of National Digital Health Networks (NDHNs) was first put forward in the Commission's EEHRxF Recommendation of 2019, as a valuable instrument to promote greater interoperability of cross-border health data. From this recommendation, the initial concept of NDHN was expanded through an intense process of discussion in the eHealth Network and its subgroups meetings and exchanges of information between their members and Member States. The eHAction members, based on the inputs received, have elaborated a set of recommendations aimed at supporting the development of NDHNs.

Very different organisational arrangements exist across the Member States. Supporting activities of the eHealth Network demonstrate how this heterogeneity can influence cooperation activities. There is already developed a governance model that is supported in the context of the digital infrastructure MyHealth@EU.

The document developed by eHAction provides structured recommendations on how this supportive national governance could be set up. Nevertheless, each Member State should set up NDHN involving representatives of the relevant competent national authorities and, where appropriate, regional authorities dealing with digital health matters and the interoperability of electronic health records, and security of networks and information systems, and the protection of personal data. The NDHN proposal not meant to harmonize how the Member States organise their bodies and stakeholders in their own country. It brings a collection on principles that Member States could refer to organise their own national digital health networks according their national needs.

Some elements should be included on the NDHN:

- (a) the national representative of the eHealth Network;
- (b) national, or regional, authorities with clinical and technical competence for digital health matters;
- (c) supervisory authorities established under Article 51 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679;
- (d) competent authorities designated pursuant to Directive (EU) 2016/1148.

The purpose of recommendations:

1. Support the Member States to formulate decisions on the establishment of bodies or functions relevant to the development of a fruitful national eHealth ecosystem, if these do not already exist;
2. Map and consolidate the possible interdependencies and synergies between the different nodes of NDHN in order to further improve its functioning, as well as collaboration with NDHN from other EU Member States.
3. Encourage the development of a common frame of reference to which all partners in the EU Digital Health ecosystem can refer when they think and act vis-à-vis national level topics regarding eHealth.

Based on this document, the role for each Member State is to define and implement their NDHNs using the suggested principles stated on this document and considering support for capacity building. Moreover, the work could be done at national level to achieve a supportive, collaborative, and sustainable governance model. In addition, more work is also needed at EU level for instant on coordinating these networks. The alignment of the governance model could be considered to be placed through the eHealth Network as a central link. However, it is important to reinforce that other governance models can arise according each Member State needs.

### **Format of procedure in the meeting**

For adoption.