

**Opinion of the Committee on Health and Welfare
2013/14:SoU29**

Review of the Green Paper on mobile health

Summary

The opinion deals with the European Commission's Green Paper on mobile health ("mHealth") COM(2014) 219

The objective of the Green Paper is to launch a broad stakeholder consultation on existing barriers and issues related to mHealth deployment and to thus find a way of unlocking mHealth potential.

The Committee welcomes the consultation process and proposes that note be taken of its opinion.

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The Committee's proposal to the Riksdag

Opinion on the Commission's Green Paper on mobile health

The Riksdag takes note of opinion 2013/14:SoU29.

Stockholm, 3 June 2014

For the Committee on Health and Welfare

Anders W Jonsson

The following members were involved in this decision: Anders W Jonsson (C), Saila Quicklund (M), Margareta B Kjellin (M), Christer Engelhardt (S), Helena Bouveng (M), Ann Arleklo (S), Isabella Jernbeck (M), Lennart Axelsson (S), Maria Lundqvist-Brömster (FP), Catharina Bråkenhielm (S), Gunnar Sandberg (S), Rickard Nordin (C), Agneta Luttröpp (MP), Anders Andersson (KD), Per Ramhorn (SD), Eva Olofsson (V) and Shadiye Heydari (S).

Overview of the matter

The matter and its preparation

On 22 April 2014, the Chamber referred the European Commission's Green Paper on mobile health ("mHealth"), COM(2014) 219, to the Committee on Health and Welfare. The Government's explanatory memorandum on the Green Paper on mobile health (2013/14:FPM86) was notified to the Chamber on 19 May 2014.

Through the Green Paper, the European Commission has invited all stakeholders to comment on the questions raised in the Green Paper by no later than 3 July 2014.

Main contents of the Green Paper

Introduction

The Green Paper on mHealth was announced in the Commission's eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020 - Innovative healthcare for the 21st century, COM (2012) 736. The term "mHealth" means mobile health and covers medical and public health practice supported by mobile devices, such as mobile phones and patient monitoring devices. mHealth also includes e.g. applications ("apps") such as lifestyle and wellbeing apps and medication reminders provided by sms.

The objective of the Green Paper is to launch a broad stakeholder consultation on existing barriers and issues related to mHealth deployment and to thus find a way of unlocking mHealth potential. The Green Paper looks at the potential of mHealth and its technological aspects and presents issues where consultation is sought. Many of the issues are not within the competence of EU law, but the Commission considers that the EU can support the Member States in their work by putting forward good examples and promoting the innovation and deployment of mHealth.

Potential of mHealth

The Commission reminds Member States that their public health systems are facing new challenges as their populations age and the pressure on their budgets increases. In this context mHealth can contribute to more patient-focused healthcare and support the shift towards prevention while at the same time improving the efficiency of the system.

The Commission also mentions the market potential of mHealth and that mHealth has emerged as a complementary way of delivering healthcare in recent years. The growth in wireless subscriptions for e.g. smartphones has expanded the mobile health and wellbeing market.

In the Green Paper, the Commission states that attention should be paid to the following areas, among others:

- state of play on the applicable EU legal framework;
- patient safety and transparency of information;
- mHealth's role in healthcare systems and equal access;
- interoperability;
- reimbursement models;
- liability;
- research and innovation in mHealth.

The Commission poses a number of questions related to these areas which should be answered during the consultation process.

Review by the Committee

Explanatory memorandum

The Government has submitted an explanatory memorandum (2013/14:FPM86) concerning the Green Paper.

According to the explanatory memorandum, the Government is working to provide patients and citizens with electronic access to their health information as well as tools that make it easier for individuals to participate in the management of their own health. The Government notes that the Commission has produced a Green Paper on mHealth and welcomes the launch of a broad stakeholder consultation on existing barriers and issues related to mHealth in order to identify the right way forward to unlock mHealth potential.

Principle of subsidiarity

According to the Government's explanatory memorandum, there is at present no need to consider the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, as the Green Paper does not contain any legislative proposals. The Committee shares this view.

Committee's position

The Committee is of the opinion that cooperation at EU level in the field of healthcare is positive, provided that attention is paid to the principle of subsidiarity and the national responsibility to provide and organise health services. Initiatives should only be taken at EU level on cross-border issues contributing to a positive exchange of good practices.

The Committee, which notes that the Government is working to provide patients and citizens with electronic access to their health information as well as tools that make it easier for individuals to participate in the management of their own health, welcomes the launch of a consultation and discussion on existing barriers and issues related to mHealth in order to better unlock mHealth potential. The Committee proposes that note be taken of its opinion.

ANNEX

List of documents examined

The European Commission's Green Paper on mobile health ("m-Health") COM(2014) 219