



D6.3 eSkills for Professionals

Information Note

WP6 Enhancing Continuity of Care

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Acronyms

Acronym	Description
eHAction	eHealth Action – 3 rd Joint Action to support the eHealth Network
eHDSI	eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure
eHMSEG	eHealth Member States Expert Group
eHN	eHealth Network
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HP	Health Professional
MoH	Ministry of Health
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MS	Member State
MS/C	Member States/Countries
MWP	Multi-Annual Work Plan
TL	Task Leader
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader
HISI	Health Informatics Society of Ireland

Executive Summary

This document presents an information note on task 6.3 “eSkills for Professionals”. Task 6.3 attempts to address priority area D.2 of the 2018 – 2021 Multi-Annual Work Programme (MWP) of the eHealth Network – to equip healthcare professionals with eSkills for eHealth services, as well as the long-standing aim of the European Commission, published in the H2020 Work Programme 2016 – 2017 – to ensure a robust supply of highly proficient eHealth professionals.

Task 6.3 will produce an evidence based report with a supportive roadmap to provide a clear understanding of how common standards or frameworks can be exploited as part of a structured methodology to develop the eSkills necessary to support eHealth in MS/C amongst designated professional groupings in healthcare.

The task involves conducting sample assessments of employees, as case studies or pilots, to validate the research results and to authenticate the methods and tools of assessment. The case studies will also trial the subsequent interventions as laid down in the roadmap of education and up-skilling that will be compiled. The roadmap will lay down a clear progression path to deliver the competence needed to enhance continuity of care and to provide eHealth professionals with fulfilment and recognition. Based on this work, the final report will outline an evidence-based approach to equipping healthcare professionals with the eSkills they require, exploiting existing content and tools and finding common ground among MS in tackling eSkills for professionals in the healthcare system. Awareness of the task and anticipation of the outcomes are nurtured from the outset as collaborative efforts aim to produce a deliverable of value and relevance to the target audience.

A scoping of the task, of which this note is an important element, will mitigate against scope creep, set stakeholder expectations and keep contributors focused on the overall objective. eHN feedback on the overall direction and strategy of the task is welcome at this initial phase.

1. Background

1.1. The Identified Need

“You can have the most technologically advanced device in the world, but if you don’t know how to operate it, it will be as useful as a jumbo-jet without a pilot.”

European Health Parliament ‘Digital Skills for Health Professionals’

Healthcare, with its increasing reliance on technology, has a requirement for professional personnel to take advantage of technological innovations that improve patient outcomes, optimise efficiency and generally to bring about a digital transformation of the service, the industry and the future developments and opportunities.

Performance, competence and continuous professional development of the healthcare workforce must be catered for in this context, with digital and professional IT skills taking their place alongside clinical competence.

More specifically, directive 2013/55/EU states the need to strengthen the educational curricula of health professionals. In 2016 the Committee on Digital Skills for Health Professionals surveyed over 200 health professionals and found that a vast majority felt insufficiently trained to deal with the digital revolution. The report recommended a joint action on digital skills for health professionals to agree key issues and determine a common approach.

“Healthcare systems require a robust supply of both highly proficient eHealth/IT professionals as well as an overall workforce that has a sufficient level of IT skills to make the optimum use of eHealth information technology. There is a shortage in the EU of eHealth workers across the full spectrum of job roles, spanning clinical, social care, informatics, and administration. There is a dearth of structured education and training opportunities to address this shortage.”¹

1.2. The Proposed Solution

D6.3 Report on eSkills for Professionals

Task 6.3 will produce an evidence based report with a supportive roadmap to provide a clear understanding of how existing common standards or frameworks can be exploited as part of a structured methodology to develop the eSkills necessary to support eHealth in MS/C amongst designated professional groupings in healthcare.

The Task 6.3 report will be produced for the eHN meeting in May 2020 but the wider audience for the report includes the eHMSEG, MoH and agencies of MS/C, EC and other eHealth Stakeholders such as academics, clinicians and professional bodies.

In particular, the report can support MS/eHMSEG by developing a process to ensure the availability of the eSkills necessary for the implementation of European eHealth Strategies and

¹ European Commission H2020 Work Programme 2016-2017 on health, demographic change and well-being

cross-border healthcare services, identifying current challenges and appropriate actions to build the necessary professional development structures for healthcare professionals.

2. Approach

There are four main elements or 'actions' in Task 6.3.

2.1. Action 1

The first action will entail desk research to scope and quantify the skills availability in eHealth, reporting the demand status quo and projecting future needs. The JAseHN D7.1.3 report 'Recommendations on a Common Framework for Mapping Health Professionals' eHealth Competencies' will be the starting point for this research. Leveraging JAseHN D7.1.3, the research questions will yield valid results as a basis for projection. Information will be gathered from EU and global reports, job portals, HR experts and other stakeholders.

2.2. Action 2

The second action will deliver an assessment methodology, procured, adapted or created, by which eHealth employees self-assess their skills and competence against their job role.

This methodology may entail an online tool, which would produce a gap analysis of in situ eHealth professionals across selected MS and in a variety of healthcare settings.

Action three will exploit the desk research results with the de-facto skills gaps, and investigate sources of education and training to address the skills needs. This action will identify formal programmes, eLearning courses, MOOC's etc. in MS, providing opportunities to up skill employees, with both certified/credentialed, and informal options.

Co-operation with eHealth stakeholders engaged with professionals and their education is an important element of action three and include but is not limited to: CEN, Higher, Further and Vocational Education Institutes, European Federation of Nurses Associations and other professional registries.

2.3. Action 3

This third action then consolidates the information from the first two actions and ends with the production of a roadmap or best practice methodology that can be repeated and replicated from MS to MS. A draft version of the roadmap will be submitted to the eHN in November 2019. Further verification of the methodology may take place before the final report is submitted in May 2020.

2.4. Action 4

A fourth action is ongoing throughout the lifetime of the task and aims to improve policy makers' understanding of scale and variety of job roles in professional healthcare delivery and foster a new culture and process of self-assessment of skills and competence for the purpose of planning professional development. Under the concept of co-creation, collaborators' interests will be combined with eHealth stakeholders' knowledge and experience producing

output of value and relevance to the target audience. Specific activities under this action will cover:

1. Connecting with, and gathering input from, the relevant experts across all MS.
2. Encouraging and directing task contributors so that every contributor makes a valuable input even if the PM allocation is small.
3. Building acceptance of the importance of the work among leaders in key sectors across MS and in so doing, increasing the likelihood of the deliverables being used, after the work package has ended.

2.5. Potential Risks

Risk management will be an ongoing activity throughout the lifetime of the task. Three substantial risks are described here.

Loss of Interest

There is a long period of time before the first deliverable due is due. Ongoing reinforcement of the aim of the task and communication with all task contributors will be essential to maintain contributors interest, engagement and to monitor and manage the effort.

Scope Creep

Due to the broad nature of the topic eSkills for Professionals, scope creep is a highly likely risk. It has been agreed amongst task contributors that the JAseHN 7.1.3 report must be used as the starting point; from where cohorts of health professionals will be identified for inclusion in Action 2.

The submission of this information note will set expectations among the eHN and provide an opportunity for expert input on the project's overall direction at this important initial stage. We ask that the eHN endorse the approach or raise any issues, so that timely adjustments can be made to the project plan.

Lack of participation from target audience

Lack of participation and ultimately buy-in from the target audience is a potential risk to a task of this nature, where energies might be directed towards the design of a sophisticated roadmap but without the involvement of the eventual beneficiaries. The concept of co-creation embedded into Task 6.3 will mitigate against this risk, where collaborators jointly produce an outcome of value and relevance. Activities in Action 4 focus on stakeholder engagement from the beginning of the task. It is envisaged, for example, that a declaration of support signed at the HISI Conference in Dublin in November will provide contributors with the impetus and mechanism to garner support for the task in their own MS. We ask that the eHN support task contributors in this endeavour.

References

European Health Parliament report on Digital Skills for Health Professionals, 2016

<http://www.healthparliament.eu/digital-skills-health-professionals/>

Multi-Annual Work Plan of the eHealth Network 2018-2021 adopted by the eHN in November 2018

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/ehealth/docs/ev_20171128_co01_en.pdf

JAsEHN T7.1.3 Recommendations on a Common Framework for Mapping Health Professionals' eHealth Competencies

http://jasehn.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/JAsEHN_D7.1.3_RECOMMENDATIONS_common_Framework_mapping_health_profession....pdf