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eHealth-units

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COVER NOTE BY EHEALTH NETWORK SECRETARIAT

Topic 4.4.1.   D5.2: Report on Identified Cross-Border Use Cases: Sharing and Learning from Best Practices on European level – eHAction

Issue at stake

New and innovative ways to utilise health data can bring about a lot of added value for patients and healthcare organisations alike. Often it is important to enable sharing and processing of health data in the cross-border setting. The common perception is that cross-border use cases have become more common and there are more analytical tools available to utilise data e.g. for the direct benefit of patients or research.

At the same time new regulations, such as GDPR, and other affecting factors have to be taken into account in order to manage the risks of cross-border sharing of sensitive data. In order to plan and execute the right policy actions in the area of "innovative use of health data in cross border setting", it is essential to identify the current use-cases and real-life problems. eHAction's work package 5 (WP5) task 5.2 "Sharing and learning from best practices on European level" will depict this state-of-play in order to give a true description of the situation and provide accurate background information for decision making.

It is very important that all Member States and countries to take an active role in these topics and use the EU investment for cross border projects on big data.

Summary

Introduction: One of the eHAction's main objectives is to improve the innovative use of health data. Tasks related to this eHAction objective are fulfilled by WP5: identified cross-border use cases, including assessment of pros & cons of stakeholders, and practical solutions with potential for European scale benefits.

Task 5.2 "Sharing and learning from best practices on European level" foresees to:
- Define and use methods to identify underlying needs and barriers experienced by stakeholders (pros & cons) affecting efficient and effective sharing of best practices in order to reach the objectives of the WP and the Joint Action;
- Investigate already formalised cross-border use cases such as European Reference Networks for rare diseases as well as practical solutions in Research and Development (R&D) including analytics in order to identify new possibilities for innovative use of big data on the European scale, to assess feasibility of network optimisation for cross-border IT infrastructure and data flow management and to enhance interdisciplinary research and openness;
- Identify the users and stakeholders with most potential to benefit from innovative cross-border sharing and use of health data.

Methods and materials: A systematic research literature review, with the main focus on applications of big data in health and innovations, from 2015 onwards has been performed to cover recent developments. Other methods such as interviews with partners and stakeholders can be employed to collect additional information which is not already available in published form.

An explorative literature search was performed in the databases Medline, Web of Science and EBSCO Discovery Services. The search yielded 231 relevant articles and 91 articles qualified for further evaluation. Ultimately, projects discovered/derived in the literature search evaluation will serve as basis for the systematic identification and analysis of needs, barriers, facilitators and best practices for cross-border sharing of health data. This will allow us to define and present new and novel use cases with potential for European-scale benefits.

Interviews to gather additional information from the partners and stakeholders will take place in autumn 2019.

Results: Among the selected 91 articles, 73% (n=66) had cross-border content and 13% (n=12) were systematic reviews. In a preliminary classification, big data was substance in 26% (n=24) articles, whereas eHealth in 49% (n=45), telemedicine in 13% (n=12), mHealth in 19% (n=17) and artificial intelligence in 4% (n=4). Articles contained a wealth of stakeholders, diseases, populations and target areas. Number of countries involved was found in 40 (44%) articles (range 1–31 countries). Secondary use of health data was dealt only in a handful of the articles. Use of EHR data was in focus in at least 17 articles. Innovative use of data, novel methodology or solution was seen in 19 articles in a preliminary analysis.

Format of procedure in the eHealth Network meeting

The Member State co-chair introduces the topic and opens the floor to the eHealth Network for comments and questions/clarifications.