

Telehealth in support of integrated care

Call for submission of success stories

Dear Member,

The Telehealth Campaign is a series of initiatives whose objectives are to increase the collaboration and awareness about telehealth in support of integrated care¹ in Europe amongst all the relevant stakeholders. The current promoters, representing patients, hospitals, health managers, health insurers and industry are AIM, EHMA, EPF, COCIR, CONTINUA, EHTEL and HOPE². For more information about the Telehealth Campaign please see the Annex 1.

The Telehealth Campaign is calling for submissions of **successful Telehealth stories** to be part of a brochure titled **“Real Telehealth Stories”**. The brochure will be disseminated across a wide audience, namely the EU institutions, national and regional policymakers and officials, patients, healthcare professionals and managers, and industry.

If you would like to contribute to the development of Telehealth in Europe and let the world know about your work, then submit your success Telehealth story.

All submissions should try to meet the following recommendations:

- The success stories depict services that are in operation, stress the human dimension (healthcare professional, patient, informal care givers), cater for integrated care and, if available, provide measurable evidence of the benefits whatever they might be (accessibility, clinical, economic, psychological, or others)
- A typical story would follow very much the style of an analytical news piece that one can read on a newspaper. A precise structure for the story is not imposed, but details about the following are expected:
 - describing the personal impact brought by the telehealth service, with quotes from the participants (i.e. patients, healthcare professionals, family, health authorities, etc.);
 - pointing out the benefits (with hard data, if available);
 - describing how the service works within the healthcare delivery setting, stressing the points of collaboration amongst the telehealth actors and the rest of the healthcare chain (integrated care);

¹ An overall working definition of integrated care delivery is *“The management and delivery of care services so that clients receive a continuum of preventive and curative services, according to their needs over time and across different levels of the care system.”* – adapted from WHO’s Technical Briefing No.1, 2008, http://www.who.int/healthsystems/service_delivery_techbrief1.pdf

² **AIM** - Association Internationale de la Mutualité www.aim-mutual.org ; **COCIR** - The European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry www.cocir.org ; **Continua Health Alliance** www.continuaalliance.org ; **EHMA** - European Health Management Association www.ehma.org ; **EHTEL** - European Health Telematics Association www.ehtel.org ; **EPF** - European Patients’ Forum www.eu-patient.eu ; **HOPE** - European Hospital and Healthcare Federation www.hope.be ;

- commenting and drawing conclusions.

For inspiration, have a look at <http://www.newhamwdtrial.org/videos/overviews> (accessed last on March 2011).

- Please provide the evidence regarding the benefits of the Telehealth service in a separate block of text. Stylistically, we will use text boxes placed out of the flow of the article to host this “evidence data”.
- The recommended maximum length of each story is about 2,000 words.
- Please submit pictures or other media separately of the text.
- Contributors are invited to submit more than one story.
- Also, we ask the contributors to omit references to branded products or to their companies in the story itself. Acknowledgement of contributors and their stories will be gathered in a different page of the brochure.
- Please consider anonymising personal data as much as possible. If not, please be sure you have informed consent from patients and caregivers before submitting your story.

Selection criteria

The Campaign cannot ensure that all submitted stories will be published. Factors such as the number of stories received; the diversity of the addressed cases and the adherence to the above considerations for submission, will dictate the selection results.

The selection criteria will favour submissions that:

- Place an emphasis on the human side of the story (e.g. patient, professionals and caregivers’ comments, reactions, likes and dislikes);
- Describe how integrated care is being realized (e.g. links among primary, secondary and tertiary care; collaboration between healthcare and social care);
- Provide (if possible, quantified) evidence of the benefits being achieved (e.g. patient satisfaction, improved health, savings in bed-days-of-care, etc)

Final editing and publishing

The Campaign will utilise a professional writer to do editorial work on the stories, to harmonise and adapt the text to the required analytical style. This person will also contact the submitting entity if any clarifications are needed. Submitting entities therefore agree, by submitting a story, that the Campaign has the right to alter their original text to meet the editing objectives above and allow the Campaign to fully exploit the contribution within the scope of its objectives. The submitting entities will be asked to approve the edited final version.

Due date and submission details

The deadline for submission is May 31, 2011.

Please email your contribution to Özgün Ünver (ozgun.unver@eu-patient.eu).

Questions?

Please contact Özgün Ünver (ozgun.unver@eu-patient.eu).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION



Annex 1

Campaign

Telehealth in support of Integrated Care³

Rationale

Telehealth, the remote care delivery between care providers and patients outside of a clinical facility, is receiving increased attention by policymakers and providers as a viable tool to support innovation in care coordination, accessibility and patient engagement. But telehealth has still not made a significant breakthrough in any member states yet despite a very large number of good pilot projects.

Member States and the European Commission are working on a number of policy initiatives in response to the Telemedicine Communication of 2008. The recent Europe 2020 Communication, the Digital Agenda and the Innovation Union flagships further stress the importance of innovative services, such as those supported through telehealth, to allow older people to live healthily and independently.

It is widely recognised that:

- care providers and patients must have a central role in the development of telehealth;
- industry is ramping up the offering of telehealth solutions;
- a notorious lack of awareness is prevalent across all sectors;
- diverse organisations representing various interests have issued positions on telehealth and/or are carrying out advocacy activities;
- not only cross-stakeholder collaboration is essential to deliver telehealth services that meet the expectations of the several groups concerned, but also that it contributes to balanced policy making;

The realisation that telehealth introduction in care systems is in motion and seems inevitable, allied to the perception that a lot still remains to be done is at the very heart of the Telehealth Campaign. Informed policy making and collective engagement works best when a critical mass of involved stakeholders collaborate and convey their positions in a concerted manner. Public at large is at best unaware of the road ahead and the Telehealth Campaign brings information forward and allows for a healthy and constructive debate. The Telehealth Campaign mobilises and makes the most of existing efforts; to expand a few single voices into a broader movement and to address decision makers and other stakeholders in general.

Objectives

The Telehealth Campaign is not a new organisation, rather a series of activities that several stakeholders informally agree to pursue. The current participants, representing patients, hospitals,

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health managers, health insurers and industry are AIM, EHMA, EPF, COCIR, CONTINUA, EHTEL and HOPE. This grouping will actively seek the participation of other stakeholder groups. Likewise, other stakeholder groups are very welcomed to join and benefit from the Telehealth Campaign.

The Campaign aims to:

- support participants' activities by creating vehicles for shared awareness raising, providing materials for dissemination, while creating a sense of community, cohesiveness and a critical mass, vis-à-vis their own constituencies, policymakers, media and society in general;
- increase the awareness about telehealth amongst the participants' constituencies across Europe;
- demonstrate the commitment of stakeholders in cooperating together to address ways to improve healthcare delivery through telehealth;
- amplify existing advocacy efforts from its participants;

Communication and outreach tools

The Campaign will mainly leverage already existing activities (events, meetings) from its participants as the basis for communication.

Materials developed by the Campaign can be used freely by the participants in their own activities either jointly or individually.

Specific face-to-face meetings with officials from the intended audiences (e.g. EC, MEPs) will be organised.

Internal coordination

The Campaign is primarily addressed at Brussels based associations whose members have a stake in the introduction of telehealth in care delivery systems in the European Union. The Campaign is an informal activity coordinated by all the participants having adhered. At the moment the following organisations have joined the initiative: AIM, COCIR, CONTINUA, EHMA, EHTEL, EPF, HOPE. All decisions are taken by consensus. Subsequent to the expression of interest to participate, no formal agreements, contracts, commitments, etc., are required.

The Campaign leverages mostly existing activities and materials from its participants. If any costs are to be incurred, the Campaign will look for voluntary work or sponsoring.

Message

The organisations participating in the Telehealth Campaign have agreed upon a common Message that embodies their collective views and aspirations. In itself, this Message is the first achievement of the Campaign:

- **21st century care systems in Europe are being restructured to better serve the entire care continuum, allowing for integrated care – from acute care right through to long term care in the home or on the move, and all stages between.**
- **We, organisations representing patients, hospitals, health managers, health insurers and industry, jointly recognise that:**
 - **Care systems must take full advantage of information and communication technologies (ICT) to deliver care in the most patient centred, resource-effective and location appropriate way.**
 - **Telehealth, supporting remote consultation, diagnosis, monitoring and treatment, can dramatically increase access, quality of care, quality of life, patient empowerment and safety while containing costs.**
 - **ICT can optimise collaboration among care providers, patients and their informal carers.**
 - **Patient centeredness, privacy, quality, safety and accountability, must be at the heart of every initiative where telehealth is part of care delivery.**
- **As accelerating the adoption of telehealth demands a collaborative approach and coherent effort across different interest groups, the signatories to this message undertake to work collaboratively to raise awareness of the benefits of telehealth.**