

## Cross-border health project epSOS: What has it achieved?

In June 2014 the large-scale epSOS pilot, providing smart cross-border health services, came to an end. The epSOS team has written a letter to highlight the achievements of the project, outline initiatives taking the results forward, inform about where project outputs can be accessed after the project, and last but not least thank everyone involved.



epSOS, meaning "Smart Open Services for European Patients", was a European large-scale pilot testing the cross-border sharing of certain health data: a summary of a patient's most important health data in case of unplanned care (the patient summary) and the electronic prescription (ePrescription).

### 25 Countries

This initiative broke new ground and generated a lot of interest in Europe: "When the project was initiated in 2008 it involved a few stakeholders, but it gradually grew to encompass 25 countries and about 50 beneficiaries", project coordinator Fredrik Lindén (Sweden) and his team write in their letter.

"The epSOS project achieved considerable results in a range of areas. Main technical deliverables include development of a solid basis for the eprescription and patient summary services, considering: governance, use cases, data content, semantics, specifications, architecture, testing mechanisms, etc."

### Concrete practice

"Importantly", the experts continue, "epSOS has taken these results into concrete practice: 16 pilots of epSOS services achieved live operations during the project. Although there were fewer cases of real patients using the services than originally envisioned, the pilot operations constituted substantial progress."

### National and European level

According to professor Lindén and his team, there is a strong momentum for eHealth interoperability in Europe. "European eHealth interoperability is currently supported by the Directive (2011/24/EU) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. [...] Nevertheless, implementation of cross-border eHealth services is to a significant extent a national prerogative."

But exciting things are taking place on European level: The eHealth Network (eHealth representatives

of the Member States) has established a subgroup of Member States dedicated to the continuation of the epSOS services.

Also, the EU-funded EXPAND project aims to secure the epSOS pilot services in anticipation of a handover to the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). And the OpenNCP community has prepared a roadmap for possible future development and intends to remain active, provided continued support from in particular national stakeholders.

### **The value of epSOS**

Recognizing the epSOS results will be relevant for future initiatives. "The value of epSOS and all our work is confirmed by the continued commitment of stakeholders at national and European levels. The results are taken forward by various endeavours. These will be all the more effective and rapid the more support you can give, also when we enter this new phase", the epSOS team concludes.

### **Background**

The epSOS project ran for six years (2008-2014) and set out to develop, pilot and evaluate cross-border eHealth services, and to formulate recommendations for future work. The focus has been safe, secure and high-quality services for exchange of patient summary data and ePrescriptions between European countries.

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The epSOS.eu website will remain accessible until end 2017. The website contains a wealth of information about epSOS, including national contacts, deliverables describing project results, information about the design process, etc.

### **Read the full letter.**

### **Read more about**

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