
Time to Implement ehealth Solutions: ehealth Week Amsterdam



Commissioner Andriukaitis: “It is now time to make a move from developing and testing to actual implementation of eHealth solutions”

eHealth Week 2016 comes to an end after having welcomed over 2,200 delegates from across the globe for three full days of conference and exhibition

Influential ministerial delegates and eHealth experts from across Europe and the globe came together to discuss how they can join forces to improve healthcare in Europe through information technology.

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The highlights of eHealth Week 2016 include the most innovative and versatile exhibition floor we have seen to date, featuring both industry leaders and captivating SMEs, as well as exhibition spaces dedicated to different eHealth players: nurses, patients and IT experts. In addition, over the three-day conference, a number of key topics were addressed and widely discussed, including chronic disease management, big data and eMental health.

During his closing speech, the European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis, named some of the challenges Europe faces today: “Europe’s ageing population is a huge challenge. Europeans aged over 65 represent 17% of the total European population. This number will double by 2060. The number of people with chronic diseases is also predicted to continue to rise putting further pressure on our healthcare systems. These challenges call for innovative solutions”, and he sent out a message to the entire eHealth Community: “It is now time to make a move from developing and testing to actual implementation of eHealth solutions”.

Trust in mHealth apps

The session “Privacy Code of Conduct for mHealth Apps” was very well attended. Representatives from the European Commission presented the final draft of the Code and explained the new provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation, especially those relevant for Codes of Conduct.

The panel included an app developer, a patient organisation representative and a member of the drafting team who all shared their expectations for the Code of Conduct as well as their practical experiences in the field. In order to be successful, the Code has to be communicated well and in an accessible manner to app developers and the governance should involve all relevant stakeholders.

The Code of Conduct has been developed by an industry drafting team, facilitated by the European Commission, and contains practical guidelines for app developers on how to take data protection principles into account when developing mHealth apps. It has been submitted on 7 June, timely for eHealth Week, to the Article 29 Working Party (an advisory group made up of all 28 national data protection authorities) for their review. Once it is approved by the 29 Working Party, it can be signed and used by developers of mHealth apps across the EU.

Sixth edition

Christina Roosen, Vice President of Public Affairs at HIMSS Europe, concluded: “This has been the 6th edition of eHealth Week held in collocation with the country which holds the European Presidency, the European Commission and HIMSS and I can say with certainty that our collaboration has once again proven to be fruitful and meaningful for the more than 2,200 people who made it to Amsterdam this year.

“We are also excited to start making plans for 2017, when eHealth Week will travel to Malta as part of their Presidency. In our early conversations with the Maltese Ministry of Health, we can reveal that eHealth Week 2017 will have a particular focus on cross-border exchange of personal health data. We hope to welcome you all there on 10 -12 May 2017.”

Martin van Rijn, State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport, added: “This was a special week. For the first time the eHealth Week followed the principles to be a patient included conference. Not only was the programme built with patients input, but patients were also part of the audiences and sessions, and it was also the first time a keynote presentation was delivered by a patient advocate”.

Source: eHealth Week

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