

Future Vision Of Regional Health Care

Regional Health Care Service Network



Foreword

The EU network operation, launched in spring 2004, generates guidelines for future health care. The Future Health operation (Network for Future Regional Health Care) is coordinated by Technomicum, an independent institute of the University of Helsinki, Finland. Twenty universities, research institutes, hospital districts and hospitals from nine EU member states participate in the operation. In addition to Finland, the partners represent Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden. The budget of the three-year operation is 1.5 million euros, and it is co-financed by EU structural funds through the Interreg IIC programme.

The European health care sector is presently undergoing profound changes. Health care costs are constantly increasing due to an aging population and rapid development of new treatments and technologies. The implementation of novel IT tools, while enabling efficient transfer and analysis of patient information, will require radically new ways of thinking, as well as major changes in modes of operation. All countries, irrespective of their economic or societal status, face the same fundamental question: how to increase the quality and volume of care, while at the same time lowering costs?

The Future Health network forms a platform where the experience of each partner is shared and utilized. The grand objective is to create a shared vision of future regional health care and to develop common tools and approaches to reach the desired outcome. Societal, medical and technological aspects will be highly relevant when creating and evaluating new modes of operation. The project has been structured divided into 5 components (CP), comprising CP 1 Management and Coordination, CP 2 Regional Health Care Service Network, CP 3 Analyzing Health Care Processes; New Processes and Organisation, CP 4 New Concepts and New Environments, and CP 5 Implementation of New Models. This report is the first in a series of five reports from the project, wherein CP 2 Regional Health Care Service Network lays the ground of common and shared visions of regional health.

We wish to thank all partners who contributed their views and experiences and whose names appear in the text as authors of individual papers, members of the Editorial Committee, and our editor Jonathan Erskine.

Birgitta Thellman
BeckChairman, Editorial
CommitteeManaging
DirectorStockholm Care,
Sweden

Harry Holthofer, ProfessorLead
PartnerDirector,
TechnomicumHelsinki
University, Finland