

eHealth

priorities and strategies
in European countries



Fact sheet

Bulgaria

March 2007

Towards the Establishment
of a European eHealth
Research Area

 **eHealth**

eHEALTH  **ERA**



Bulgaria

Strategic perspective

The next step to developing a working electronic health care system in Bulgaria is the adoption of the national strategy for eHealth implementation. This horizontal policy document, issued in April 2006, is a substantial part of the National Strategy for Health of Bulgaria. Its development was based on a preliminary analysis, which covered:

- Bulgarian and world experience in implementing ICT in healthcare,
- state of the Bulgarian health system,
- trends of modern health care in advanced countries,
- social needs driving electronic services in the health care sphere.

The main goals of the electronic health care strategy are: increased quality of health care, improved qualifications of the health professionals, and application of innovative medical technologies. An action plan with detailed description of pilot eHealth projects for practical realisation of the National eHealth strategy is being developed.

Implementation perspective

Currently in Bulgaria, the health care system is not well advanced. Despite the health care reforms and the availability of good professionals in this area, dissatisfaction with the quality of delivered services continues. In addition, concerning the use of information technologies, Bulgaria has the lowest indexes of growth of the new EU countries and is behind in the process of introducing ICT in health care. Currently only a fraction of the medical service providers (some physicians, hospitals and private medical centres), some producers and distributors (of medications, medical materials and medical devices), and some pharmacies use special software. Some have more generic software products which at least partially support the needed functionalities.



The Ministry of Health owns some software products, which process information coming in from subordinate authorities. However, currently there is no centralised data store of medical information about patients, and there is no system for delivering the information needed for the Ministry analysis, planning and executive reports. The Ministry of Health intends to update these processes and thereby optimise the analysis and planning of health care resources.

Future activities

Based on an analysis of current eHealth in Bulgaria and on a study of the eHealth experiences in other countries, the following priorities for further eHealth development have been defined:

- Create a business model for the processes and relationships between the participants in the health care system.
- Where necessary, establish new legal regulations governing these healthcare processes and relationships.
- Establish computerised systems connecting parties in the health sector.



- Provide specialised software for use by health care professionals.
- Introduce a more efficient and integrated information system to support decision making by managers in the health sector.
- Upgrade university level health education programmes in order to help introduce innovative technologies and working methods.

The Action plan for implementation of eHealth in Bulgaria envisages the introduction of the electronic health record and personal health record. The priority projects will be the implementation of eHealth cards, hospital information systems, personal health record, and web based applications for use by patients.

Core resources

Foundation Electronic Healthcare Bulgaria (2005):
Program for Development of Electronic Healthcare as a Part of the Contemporary Health System of the Republic of Bulgaria.
Republic of Bulgaria:
National Strategy for introduction of electronic healthcare in Bulgaria 2006 – 2009.

About eHealth ERA

This fact sheet is the outcome of research in the context of the *eHealth ERA* project (Towards the Establishment of a European Research Area). The project is implemented by empirica GmbH (coordinating partner, Germany), STAKES (Finland), CITTRU (Poland), ISC III (Spain), CNR (Italy) and EPSRC (United Kingdom), based on a Coordination Action contract with the European Commission.

The European Commission, Directorate General Information Society and Media, supports this project to contribute towards greater transparency across Member States and other participating countries on eHealth strategies as well as innovation-oriented research and technology development (RTD) initiatives, including the coordination of Member States' eHealth strategy formulation and implementation.

The fact sheet is an excerpt from the report "eHealth priorities and strategies in European countries", published by the European Commission in April 2007. The complete report is available for download at http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3346.

Acknowledgements

The eHealth ERA team owes a great debt to all the national representatives and their national experts who contributed to and reviewed the fact sheets. Possible inaccuracies of information are at the responsibility of the project team. This fact sheet reflects solely the views of its authors. The status of activities described is generally August 2006.

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Contact

For further information about this fact sheet or the eHealth ERA project, please contact:



eHealth ERA

c/o empirica GmbH
Oxfordstr. 2, 53111 Bonn, Germany
Fax: (49-228) 98530-12
eMail: info at ehealth-era dot org
<http://www.ehealth-era.org>



CNR

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche
Unità Sanità Elettronica
Circonvallazione Nomentana 496
00162 Roma
Italy