



Ministry of Health
of the Republic of Latvia



meHEALTH



*Information for the media
Riga, 02.03.2015*

Experts will discuss development of mHealth in Europe at eHealth Week *Report into mHealth sets agenda for Europe's influential eHealth Week taking place in Riga this May*

Privacy, security, patient safety, a clear legal framework and evidence of cost-effectiveness are all necessary for mobile health (mHealth) to flourish in Europe, according to more than 200 organisations who participated in a public consultation on mHealth, organised by the European Commission (EC).

The long-awaited results of this Green Paper consultation will form the basis of numerous discussions at eHealth Week 2015 and, in parallel, the mHealth Summit, taking place in Riga, Latvia in May.

mHealth in Latvia

"In Latvia, several projects related to mobile health have commenced – for example, Lattelecom, the Pauls Stradins Clinical University Hospital and the Latvian Rural Family Physicians Association are cooperating in the framework of a Competency Centre programme", said Signe Bāliņa, the president of The Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association – LIKTA. "They are researching telemedicine solutions for monitoring heart and diabetic patients."

Bāliņa added: "By using telecommunication services, the care of chronically ill patients in Latvian rural areas can be improved. At the same time, mHealth must be integrated into the existing eHealth projects so that they provide convenience for the patient and reduce the workload of the physician".

Fast growing market

Research company *BCC Research* forecasted in its report "Mobile Health Technologies and Global Markets", published last year, that the global mHealth market will be worth over 19 billion euros by 2018, with Europe being the fastest growing segment.

Daina Mūrmane-Umbraško, director of The National Health Service of Latvia said: "Digital Europe is one of the most important Latvian priorities during the Latvian Presidency. The rapidly growing information technologies provide both a source of momentous opportunities that will boost smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for the EU and challenges that need to be timely addressed in order to seize these opportunities in health sector also. Latvian Presidency will focus on patient-centred healthcare and empowerment of patients, using technologies to improve the quality of

healthcare, innovations in eHealth and mHealth, cross-border exchange of health data and patient data protection issues.”

Therefore mHealth will be one of the key topics of eHealth Week 2015. One of the first events of the conference will be a joint plenary by the Latvian Presidency of the EU Council, the European Commission and HIMSS on the follow-up to the Green Paper on mHealth, which was published in the spring of 2014 and announced in the European *eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020*.

Pēteris Zilgalvis, Head of Unit Health and Wellbeing, DG Connect, European Commission, who will be a key speaker at eHealth Week said: "It's not about asking the citizens to come to digital but about digital services going to where the citizens are to help them manage their health as well as disease. mHealth has this potential, provided it is safe to use while respecting people's privacy. At eHealth Week, we will host a public discussion on the next steps for mHealth in Europe to take. We invite everyone to be part of this discussion."

In addition to Pēteris Zilgalvis, participants of the plenary on mHealth (12 May at 9 – 10:30 am) will also include Petra Wilson, CEO of International Diabetes Federation, Paul de Raeye, Secretary General of the European Federation of Nurses Associations, Javier Ferrero Álvarez-Rementería, CIO of the Andalusian Agency for Healthcare Quality and Sophie Mestchersky, Director, European Policy and Government Affairs, Application Developers Alliance. In the afternoon of 12 May, the discussion will be taken further at a special EU mHealth stakeholder event, also part of eHealth Week.

Those who want to focus on mHealth even more can attend the mHealth Summit on 11 May and, overlapping with eHealth Week, on 12 May, organised by HIMSS Europe.

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Editors' notes

Please contact Paloma Nosten (pnosten@himss.org) for more information, to arrange an interview or to register for the event as press.

About mHealth

mHealth is an emerging part of eHealth, where mobile communication technologies are integrated into the healthcare provision process. It includes applications which perform measurements (e.g. of glucose levels), complement medical devices (e.g. helping in the delivery of insulin by transmitting control signals to an insulin pump from a mobile platform), remind patients they should take their medication, as well as provide recommendations to improve users' overall health & wellbeing etc.

The Commission's [eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020](#), published in 2012, already recognized the potential benefits of mobile health apps, as well as the potential risks. A Green Paper on mHealth was published in 2014 in the framework of the Action Plan. The Green Paper was accompanied by a Staff Working Document to raise app developers' awareness of EU rules on data protection, medical devices (helping them determine whether such legislation applies to their apps or not) and consumer directives.

About the mHealth Green Paper

The public consultation on mHealth was open from 10 April until 10 July 2014. It invited stakeholders to provide their views on 11 issues related to the uptake of mHealth in the EU. These were: data protection, including security of patient health data; big data; state of play of the applicable EU legal framework; patient safety and transparency of information; the role of mHealth

in healthcare systems as well as equal access; interoperability; reimbursement models; liability; research & innovation; international cooperation; and access of IT companies to the mHealth market. You can find the results [here](#).

About eHealth Week and WoHIT

eHealth Week 2015, combined with the World of Health IT (WoHIT), is the main eHealth event in Europe, to be held in Riga, in May 11 – 13, as part of Latvia's Presidency of the EU Council. It is organized by the European Commission, the Latvian Ministry of Health and the international non-governmental organization HIMSS Europe. During eHealth Week 2015 over a thousand international experts from the fields of IT and healthcare, public institutions, professional and patient organizations will visit Latvia.

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