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Developing and implementing national eHealth services for patients – an interactive exploration of challenges and potential solutions

Maria HÄGGLUND[a,1], Rose-Mharie ÅHLFELDT[b], Sabine KOCH[a], Ture ÅLANDER[c]
and Isabella SCANDURRA[d]

[a] *Health Informatics Centre, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden*
[b] *School of Informatics, University of Skövde, Sweden*
[c] *Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences (IFV),Uppsala University, Sweden*
[d] *Informatics, School of Business, Örebro University, Sweden*

Abstract In this workshop, examples and experiences from ongoing work to develop and implement eHealth services for citizens will be provided. Challenges and potential solutions based on different international contexts will be discussed in interactive sessions. The results will form a report suggesting strategies and activities that could provide potential solutions to the identified challenges.

Keywords. Patient access to records, Electronic health records. Professional-Patient relations, Patient empowerment.

Introduction of the topic

As a means to address current challenges for and demands on health and social care, e.g. quality of care and patient empowerment, information and communication technologies (ICT) are being used to supply citizens with various health services [1, 2]. One example is to give patients web access to their own electronic health records (EHRs) [3]. In this workshop, we will provide examples and experiences from ongoing work in Sweden to develop and implement eHealth services for citizens; SUSTAINS [4, 5], My Care Pathways [6] and DOME [4, 7, 8]. The workshop participants will be engaged in interactive discussions regarding challenges and potential solutions based on their experiences from different international contexts and user groups.

We strive to involve participants from many research and clinical areas in order to spread awareness of existing research about the challenges and opportunities of providing patients with access to online health records. We hope to have a broad international audience to be able to draw on experiences from different contexts in the discussions. Patient representatives are especially encouraged to participate – either in person or online before and after the workshop.

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[1] Maria Hägglund.

Specific interests and/or experiences can be in e-health service development, implementation, evaluation, system integration, decision support, user needs and cognition (human factors). Experiences of information quality, privacy and security, informatics policies, ethical issues and patient empowerment would also be fruitful for the discussions.

Thus, the goal is to attract a mix of researchers from different research fields, such as medicine, nursing, health informatics, biomedical informatics, computer science, information science, health economics, etc. Furthermore, the nature and aim of the workshop encourages both patient representatives and practitioners (e.g. doctors, nurses, managers, and developers) to actively contribute with their interests, knowledge and experiences and gain insights and practical know-how from the discussions at the workshop, either physically at the workshop or participating through e.g. Twitter.

1. Aim of the discussion

The aim of the workshop is twofold; (1) to explore challenges for developing and implementing e-health systems for citizens to access their patient information and other e-health services online, and (2) to suggest strategies and activities that could provide potential solutions to the identified challenges.

2. Contribution from each speaker

The disposition of the workshop is as follows: Session 1 focuses on challenges; beginning with a brief presentation of experiences from three Swedish projects followed by discussions in smaller groups where participants share experiences from their international contexts (participants divided into 3-5 groups depending on the size of the audience). Session 2 focuses on potential solutions to these challenges; starting with presentations from the Swedish projects with ideas for how to address some of the identified challenges, and again followed by a group discussion aiming to suggest strategies and activities to meet the previously identified challenges [6]. The two sessions will contain both presentations from the workshop organizers and interactive discussions in smaller groups to engage all participants and share experiences from different contexts.

Table 1. Overview of workshop disposition and content

Time	Topic	Content
15 min	Experiences of challenges from Swedish projects	SUSTAINS (I. Scandurra) DOME (T. Ålander) My Care Pathways (M. Hägglund)
20 min	Exploring challenges	Group discussion (all participants)
15 min	Potential solutions? Inspiration from current projects	SUSTAINS/DOME (R. Åhlfeldt) My Care Pathways (S. Koch)
20 min	Suggesting strategies and activities	Group discussion (all participants)
20 min	Summary	Connecting challenges and solutions, discussion of differences between contexts

This disposition requires active participants to generate new ideas and knowledge through discussions and reflections where all participants contribute with their knowledge and understanding of the problem. All speakers will be actively involved to facilitate and guide the discussions, as well as to summarize the contributions of each group. The topic is expected to engage a lot of people, maybe not only those present at the workshop or at the conference. The workshop organizers will therefore encourage live tweeting during the sessions and invite followers (both participants physically present in the room and others) on Twitter to engage in the discussion during and after the workshop. Twitter discussions will be summarized and all results of the workshop will be published on easily accessible web sites afterwards.

3. Expected results

Expected results are fruitful discussions in an international forum, partly based on experiences from the Swedish cases. We hope to raise issues that may hinder or delay the introduction of patients' online access to their medical records in Europe, or elsewhere, and suggest solutions to these issues.

The interactive design of the workshop is intended to both activate the participants own thoughts and reflections on the topic and to bring an international perspective to the presented experiences. We also expect that the participants leave the workshop with new ideas and insights that are relevant to their situations and contexts and can enable progress in these issues throughout Europe. Summarizing the group discussions, we strive to obtain a rich description and identification of challenges across Europe. Together with the discussion of potential solutions we expect to provide important input to eHealth strategies and action plans that are continuously developed and implemented across Europe and internationally.

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