

## Dear members, partners and friends,

With this newsletter you receive the latest news of the eHealth for Regions Network! A lot has happened over the last six months. First of all, we have a new network partner from Germany: the Northern German Epilepsy Centre for Children and Adolescents. From 1 January 2012, the Medical Chamber of Schleswig-Holstein will also join the eHealth for Regions Network.

In September, our project application "PrimCare IT" within the Baltic Sea Programme 2007-2013 was approved.

You will also hear about the latest and upcoming meetings of the network, the results of our online-survey "Challenges and Opportunities in Health Care in the Baltic Sea Region" as well as about the 6<sup>th</sup> Virtual Seminar.

## What happened so far?

### European Commission's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Forum on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

The eHealth for Regions Network has the lead role for promoting eHealth issues within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). It has a close and fruitful cooperation with the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS).

The eHealth for Regions Network and its project "ICT for Health" had the opportunity to present their work together with the NDPHS and the project "ImPrim" at the European Commission's 2nd Annual Forum on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Gdańsk from 24<sup>th</sup> till 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011.



PSB member Dr. Renée Buck (Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Health of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany), Christine von Hielmcrone and Prof. Roland Trill (both from the Management Secretariat), ESC member Martin Tretbar-Endres (Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Health of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany) and Stefan Musiolik from the State Chancellery of Land Schleswig-Holstein

### ESC- and PSB-Meeting in Gdańsk, Poland

The ESC and PSB members met in Gdańsk from 24<sup>th</sup> till 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Topics were, inter alia, the results of the online-survey, contacts to other networks and the cooperation with the NDPHS.

Guests from Lappeenranta, Riga, Moscow and Kaliningrad participated at both meetings of the eHealth for Regions Network. Altogether, 21 participants from the Baltic Sea Region took part in the eHealth for Regions meetings in Gdańsk.



Members of the ESC, the Management Secretariat and guests at the ESC-meeting in Gdańsk



PSB members Stefan Lamme (Region Skåne, Sweden), Dr. Renée Buck (Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Health of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany) and Aulis Ranta-Muotio (South Ostrobothnia Health Care District, Finland) at the PSB-meeting in Gdańsk

Inter alia, the following decisions were taken:

- The eHealth for Regions Conference 2012 will focus on best practices on prevention and treatment of chronic diseases with eHealth as a tool. It takes place in Copenhagen, June 4, 2012 (see below).
- eHealth for Regions Award: from 2012, the eHealth for Regions Network will award a prize for eHealth projects and applications.
- The Network Agreement was adjusted.
- Unfortunately, the Pomeranian Region is no longer a partner of the eHealth for Regions Network. The Management Secretariat is asked to find new partners from Poland.

### Changes in the PSB

Asta Meškerevičiūtė left the Ministry of Health. Therefore, she is no longer the PSB member from Lithuania.

The network thanks Asta Meškerevičiūtė for her high involvement in the development of the network.

### New German partners

Since October 2011, the eHealth for Regions Network has a new member from Schleswig-Holstein: the Northern German Epilepsy Centre for Children and Adolescents in Raisdorf.

The treatment of epilepsy is a new and very interesting topic for the eHealth for Regions Network. It is planned to have a common project in this area.

In the following, our new German partner introduces himself.

The Northern German Epilepsy Centre for Children and Adolescents (NGEC) Raisdorf was founded in 1972 by Prof. Hermann Doose and has extensive experience in addressing medical, psychological and social problems of young patients with epilepsies including their families. The NGEC is situated 7 km from the center of Kiel and cooperates closely with the Neuropediatric Department of the University Hospital of Schleswig-Holstein (UKSH), Campus Kiel, providing 3T MRI, PET, SPECT, metabolic, genetic workup and pre-surgical monitoring. The NGEC is run by the Schleswig-Holstein branch of

Deutsches Rotes Kreuz (German Red Cross).

Children with a difficult treatment of epilepsies are admitted for work-up and treatment using the teamwork of pediatric epileptologists, psychologists and neuropsychologists, EEG-technicians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, specialized teachers and social workers. Inpatients stay for the mean of 6 days in the hospital.

The innovative concept of the NGEC is based on two mainstays. We use the eHealth system EpiVista® for all patients to replace long periods of inpatient treatment by continuous outpatient treatment. EpiVista® is a freely available online epilepsy treatment diary ([www.epivista.de](http://www.epivista.de)). Since the epileptologic concept is focused on electronically augmented outpatient care, our concept allows the manpower needed to address frequent disabling psychological and social problems of our patients and their families, who frequently live in remote or rural areas at long distances from the NGEC.

Electronic documentation in EpiVista® of seizures, treatment (e.g. antiepileptic drugs, AED) and side effects is performed by the families at home. Treatment effects and interactions in combined treatment regimens are readily visualized using graphical interfaces and graphical reproduction of data. Since the clinical course and treatment effects are transparent for the patients and their families, electronically augmented follow-up enables patients and families to take responsibility and control of their disease. Patients learn about dosage, effects and interactions of drugs as well as side effects. We encourage shared decision making and coherence, and we have a strong focus on quality of life.

The treatment plan can be adjusted rapidly according to the clinical course and patient's needs at any time. The full infor-

mation of the clinical course avoids delays by fixed outpatient or inpatient schedules.

In addition to these individual applications, statistical measures are available to evaluate treatment effects in both single patients and in patient groups according to well-known epilepsy syndromes and new epileptic entities. In recent studies statistical analysis of such diary data was approved.

NGEC would like to foster a widespread use of EpiVista® providing benefit for patients and their families. Additional value can be achieved when local practitioners, child neurologists and hospitals will eventually join the EpiVista® network.

Apart from the immediate clinical benefit for the individual patients EpiVista® may be used for clinical research. The electronic network may as well be used for monocentric or multicenter treatment trials to document and analyze the effects of anti-convulsive medication in pediatric patient cohorts, providing scientific evidence for treatment protocols in a field, in which scientific evidence is largely missing.

#### Additional information

NGEC cares for patients aged up to 18. The hospital is well equipped. In addition to examination and treatment rooms, there are parent-child-units, family apartments for those who accompany the young patients, playrooms and a hospital school.

Head physicians of the Northern Germany Epilepsy Centre for Children and Adolescents:

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direct impact on patient comfort and accessibility of health care services. Appointment reservation became more transparent and more effective. Patients are satisfied using all possibilities of appointment reservation: Internet, mobile or wired phone, as well as using medical staff assistance.

The presentation of this virtual seminar is available on our website.

The next virtual seminar will be held in February 2012.

### **eHealth for Regions Conference 2012**

The eHealth for Regions Conference 2012 will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 4 June, 2012. This one-day conference will present the best practices on prevention and treatment of chronic diseases with eHealth as a tool. The target groups are physicians, nurses, IT-professionals, and patient representatives.

Further information will be available on our website in the beginning of next year.

**Save the date!**  
**4 June 2012**  
**Copenhagen**

### **Project News**

#### **ICT for Health – working towards greater acceptance of eHealth in the Baltic Sea Region**

The Baltic Sea Region - as all the western countries - is facing the increasing challenge of demographic change: Our population is ageing while labour force is decreasing. Healthcare is a sector greatly influenced by this challenge. The three-year project ICT for Health, co-funded by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, puts the importance of ICT acceptance in the core of ensuring high-level health care also in the future. The knowledge and acceptance to use eHealth technologies by citizens and medical professionals is a basic condition to further implement and develop innovative technologies in the health sector.

This article will give a short insight into the recent developments of the various project activities. The “Impact of Demographic Change”, published in July 2011, describes the demographic and epidemiological development in the partner regions of the ICT for Health project. Another two publications, concerning eHealth education, have been recently published. “How to teach eHealth” focuses on the methods to teach eHealth to adult students. The report “Baseline study of eHealth in education in the Baltic Sea Area” reveals that in the participating countries, a wide range of programmes and courses with eHealth elements already exist, but are not integrated in the education of traditional health care professionals. Furthermore, an eHealth study pilot was launched in Seinäjoki, Finland, to put the words into practice.

Empowering patients is seen as a way to improve the quality of life for the chronically ill and elderly patients. The ICT for

Health project has launched SALUDA – a self-monitoring programme which will include 400 pilot patients with chronic heart failure. The web-based programme is at the moment available in four languages. It aims at improving the quality of life in a user-friendly way (<http://www.saluda-asd.de/en/index.php>).

Enabling travelling for elderly and chronically ill citizens is also one of the aims of the project. At the moment, a multilingual portal “VivaPort” is being implemented after an intensive analysis of EU policy and existing solutions related with personal health portal in Europe and worldwide.



For more information, please visit  
<http://www.ictforhealth.net>

### **New project: PrimCare IT - Counter-acting brain drain and professional isolation of health professionals in remote primary health care through tele-consultation and tele-mentoring to strengthen social conditions in remote BSR**

PrimCare IT, another Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 project developed within the initiative of the eHealth for Regions Network, was approved by the Monitoring Committee at the end of September 2011. Being a part of the flagship projects ImPrim and ICT for Health, this project is one of the promoters of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

The Baltic Sea Region is facing the challenge of an ageing population, which leads to a rising demand for primary health care services throughout the regions. Moreover, an increasing lack of health care spe-

cialists, especially in sparsely populated areas, challenges the maintaining of primary health care services.

One of the main aims of the PrimCare IT project is to raise the attractiveness of remote primary health care. Reduced professional brain drain and isolation, opportunities for professional networking and continuing medical education as well as career development in remote areas are several issues which could be efficiently managed by the means of tele-consultation and tele-mentoring including social media.

To address those issues effectively in the partner regions the project composition involves organizations responsible for planning as well as provision of primary and secondary health care such as family doctors, medical associations, hospitals, regional administrations and districts.

During the next 27 months the project partners will analyze existing barriers for large scale deployment of tele-consultation and tele-mentoring such as technology acceptance, work flows, daily routines and legal uncertainties. Basing on the analysis, jointly developed tele-consultation and tele-mentoring solutions between general practitioners and medical specialists in pilot sites in Finland, Sweden, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Belarus will be implemented. Moreover, PrimCare IT will reuse the outputs from the ICT for Health project, i.e. education courses to raise the eHealth acceptance of health professionals and financial incentives for professional development, elaborated within the ImPrim project.

The project starts in January 2012 with the composition of 16 partners from 7 countries and the total financial capacity of 2.58 million euros. The lead partner of the project is the South Ostrobothnia Healthcare District from Seinäjoki, Finland.

## What comes up?

### Overview about the upcoming events

- 15/02/12** 7<sup>th</sup> Virtual Seminar  
Topic: "Education on eHealth including health care professionals and citizens with chronic diseases"
- 20/03/12** Information Event about the eHealth for Regions Network in Kiel
- 02/05/12** 8<sup>th</sup> Virtual Seminar
- 20/05/12** ESC Meeting in Bad Segeberg, Germany
- 04/06/12** eHealth for Regions Conference 2012 in Copenhagen
- xx/09/12** 9<sup>th</sup> Virtual Seminar
- 06/11/12** ESC Meeting in Brussels
- 07/11/12** PSB Meeting in Brussels
- xx/11/12** 10<sup>th</sup> Virtual Seminar

**We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



If you have any questions or comments concerning the eHealth for Regions Network, please contact:

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